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MEMOIRS

OF A

TRAVELLER,

NOW IN RETIREMENT.

MEMOIRS

OF A

TRAVELLER,

NOW IN RETIREMENT.

WRITTEN BY HIMSELF.

INTERSPERSED WITH

HISTORICAL, LITERARY, AND POLITICAL

ANECDOTES,

RELATIVE TO

MANY OF THE PRINCIPAL PERSONAGES

OF THE PRESENT AGE.

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH, UNDER THE SUPERINTENDANCE OF THE AUTHOR.

IN FIVE VOLUMES.

VOL. III.

Dulcis inexpertis cultura potentis amici,
Expertus metuit.—*HOR. lib. I. epist.* 18. *v.* 86.

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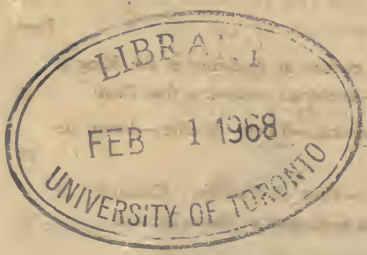

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MEMOIRS

OF A

TRAVELLER.

PART III.

CHAPTER XII.

Duchillou obtains an Audience of the King of Prussia.—Anecdotes relative to that Court.

From Wittemberg we went to Potsdam, which is upon the road to Berlin. It is at Potsdam that the King of Prussia generally resides; and he was there at that time. We had given in our names at the gates of the city; but the King

having perceived us, from the windows of the castle, alighting at the inn, sent a footman to inquire who we were. I gave him our names in writing: and we then went to see the Lord Mareschal, for whom we had letters; as well as for M. de Cat, Secretary of the Cabinet, and for Quintus Icilius, one of the King's friends. I had taken these precautions, in the idea that I should find some difficulty in being presented to the King; who frequently refuses to see foreigners, though of the highest rank, especially when he is at Potsdam. The Lord Mareschal wrote to procure us the honour of being presented, without however acquainting us with the success of the attempt. He talked to us of the frequent refusal of the King to see foreigners; and mentioned the answer of an Englishman on that subject, who had come to him one day, without any letter of recommendation, to ask him

to present him to the King of Prussia. His lordship told him that it was not such an easy matter, and that many great noblemen had been refused. "Faith!" said the Englishman, "it is "not that I care much about it; but "as I have already seen five Kings, I "should have been glad to make up "the half-dozen."

The King sent an answer, saying that he would see Lord Algernon Percy, without saying a word about me. I was not at all satisfied at seeing my attempt frustrated. I had a great curiosity to see the King of Prussia, and had proposed to pass through Berlin solely for that purpose. I applied to the Abbé Bastiani, who dined and supped every day with the King, and was considered as a sort of favourite: he made some attempts, but in vain. I then employed M. de Cat, who was not more fortunate. I went to see Quin-

tus Icilius (of whom I shall say more hereafter); but he was in disgrace, and could not assist me: so that I almost despaired of success.

I had perceived, from the conversation of those who were well acquainted with the King, that praise was not displeasing to him; and as his extraordinary merit offered a vast field for my fancy, I resolved not to be sparing of my applause. He was fond of being thought a good architect, and had built a great deal at Potsdam and in its environs. I immediately wrote some verses, in which I extolled Potsdam to the skies. I compared the city to nothing less than ancient and modern Rome, and the King himself to the two Cæsars; to Julius as a great captain, and to Augustus as the builder of so many magnificent edifices. I had these verses lying upon my table, one day, when the Abbé Bastiani came to visit me: he saw

them, thought well of them, and said he would shew them to the King. The King was pleased with them. He asked some questions concerning me, and my friends took this opportunity of telling him that I had come to Potsdam on purpose to see him. He made no reply, and nobody dared to question him. The next day I went to see the new castle which he had built, at the distance of two leagues from Potsdam. The keeper gave me a book; in which, he said, those who came to the castle wrote their names, and that the King cast his eye over the book when he came to walk there. I wrote my name, and added an eulogium upon the architect: the King saw it two days after, and smiled.

At length, while I was at Berlin, where I had gone to spend a week, I received a letter from the Abbé Bastiani, informing me that the King

had read the verses which I had addressed to him; and that it appeared to him, from the observations he had been able to make, that my flattery was delicate and pleasing. I returned to Potsdam; where I had scarcely arrived an hour, when I received a note from M. de Cat, secretary of the cabinet, informing me that the King would see me the next morning at eleven o'clock, and directing me to apply to the Baron de Coccei to present me. This was the very person whom I have already said that I saw at Turin disguised as a Saxon merchant. He waited upon me; and conducted me to the King, who was alone. I found his countenance dignified and noble, his eyes large, his look quick and piercing, his air engaging, and a great facility of expression. He asked me several questions relative to my travels, and the different courts I had visited; and he par-

ticularly inquired at what time I had been at Turin. I mentioned designedly the year when the Baron de Coccei was there. He immediately turned towards the Baron; and seemed, by his manner of looking at him, to ask if I had been informed of the object of his mission (which I have mentioned in the second part). The Baron bowed, in sign of the affirmative; upon which the King looked steadfastly at me, but in such a manner that I read in his eyes that he asked me the same question. To this I replied by a tacit "Yes, Sire;" and this mute dialogue was so expressive, that none of us mistook each other. The King went on more openly, asking me some questions relative to the subject; particularly about Lord Bute and Mr. Mackenzie, to whom he attributed in part the ill success of his negociation. As he took leave of me, the King said, "I have only one friend

" in England, and that is Lord Chester-
" field : I beg you will make my com-
" pliments to him."

I went to thank the Abbé Bastiani for the pains he had taken in facilitating my presentation ; and upon that occasion the Abbé said to me, " It seems to me " that you know the King as well as " we do, who have been so many years " about him ; there was nothing but " the manner in which you have prais-
" ed him, that could have procured you " the honour of an audience."

The Abbé Bastiani was very polite and obliging. Knowing that the King was fond of praise, he had availed himself of it, and at that time stood better with him than any other person. He shewed me several letters and epistles in verse which he had addressed to the King ; and a large manuscript in reply to the *System of Nature*, in which that prince took the part of religion

against the author of a system so contrary to the interest of the State. The Abbé was canon of Breslaw. He was very desirous of being the bishop, and thought he had some reason to believe that he should obtain his desire: but the King contrived to amuse him with vain hopes; for he had twice appointed to that bishopric, since the Abbé had paid his court to him. However, he did not despond, painful as was the part he had to perform at Potsdam. Perhaps the pliancy of his disposition rendered his task less difficult.

Quintus Icilius told me, that the King once consulted him upon a little treatise on morality for the young nobility, which he wished to have printed. He contented himself with saying, rather drily, that it was good. "The "Abbé Bastiani is coming," said the King, "I want to know his opinion." —"You will do very right, Sire."

—" Do not you think him a good " judge ?"—" Oh ! very good."—"And " that he will give me his sincere opi- " nion ?"—" I hope he will." The Abbé came. " Bastiani," said the King, " here is a little work of mine, upon " which I wish to consult you."—" Sire, " you overwhelm me with honour."— " But I wish you to tell me your opinion " freely."—" I know that is the way " to please your Majesty." — " It " is a treatise upon morality, for the " use of the young nobility." The King had scarcely read two lines, when the Abbé exclaimed, that he had never heard any thing so fine. " Stop " then," said the King, " till I read far- " ther on."—" But, Sire, this beginning " alone is equal to the best treatise we " have on the subject." The King went on : the Abbé seemed as if he was in ecstasy ; and exhibited such trans- ports, that the King was obliged to

stop from time to time, to give free course to his praises. At last the reading was finished: the Abbé fell on his knees before the King; and seizing his hands, which he kissed and bathed with his tears, "Sire," cried he, "allow me, "in the name of all your subjects, to "return you a thousand thanks, for "the good you have done to them and "to their posterity, by giving them so "divine a work!" The King had too much understanding not to perceive that the Abbé had overshot his mark, and probably did not esteem him the more for it. Quintus himself bowing his head, and looking at the Abbé, said within himself: "Ah! poor Quin-"tus, thou art but a novice; there is "thy master, and the master of all who "wish to stand well with Kings."

It is proper that I should inform my readers who this Quintus Icilius was. His father was a potter at Magdebourg,

and was named Guischard. I do not know by what accident the King happened to see him, when he was only ten or twelve years old. He was pleased with his repartees, and thought he perceived in him the germ of future talents: he therefore sent him to study in Holland; and young Guischard profited so well by the lessons of his masters, that he soon made a great proficiency. He applied himself particularly to the study of the classics, and to acquiring a knowledge of the tactics of the ancients: he even wrote a work upon that subject, which he dedicated to the King of Prussia; and as he appeared very fond of the Romans, the King, on the following occasion, gave him a Roman name. One day, when His Majesty made a great promotion, he appointed, at his levee, all the officers who were present; and among others, he said that some battalions should be com-

manded by Quintus Icilius. Every body stared; and was anxious to know who this new colonel was, that they had never heard of before. The King, perceiving their embarrassment, told them that their curiosity should soon be satisfied. The troops were accordingly drawn up, the King directed every officer to place himself at his new post, and taking Guischard (who had never seen an engagement) by the hand: "Gentlemen," said he, "this "is Quintus Icilius;" and he placed him at the head of three battalions,* which he afterwards employed at Dresden and in the environs, and in operations in which there was not much fighting.

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* The King probably gave him this name of an ancient Roman who had commanded the tenth legion, because Quintus frequently spoke with enthusiasm of the tactics of the Romans.

Quintus Icilius, for a long time, enjoyed the greatest favour with the King: he had talents and information; and though a pretty good courtier, he was not a servile flatterer. He fell in love with a young widow, who was very amiable and rich: she was fond of him, and they were engaged to be married. It was necessary, however, to obtain the consent of the King: who did not like his friends to marry, because he said that he could then no longer venture to trust them with his secrets; for fear of their communicating them to their wives, who would not fail to divulge them. Quintus made several attempts to obtain this permission from the King, but in vain. "Why do "you wish to leave me, my dear Quin- "tus?" said His Majesty one day to him, embracing him: "you are of ser- "vice to me, I am attached to you;

" and I foresee that, if you marry, " we must separate." This refusal vexed Quintus exceedingly. He scarcely ever spoke to the King. He continued to dine every day at his table, but always seemed in an ill humour. The King perceived it; was affronted, and resolved to be revenged, in a manner which he thought delicate.

At table he had a custom of jesting with his guests. The Marquis d'Argens, who dined every day with him, had been his *butt* for twenty years: but he had left Potsdam six months before, on a visit to his native country; so that poor Quintus, in his absence, was most commonly the subject of the King's jokes, and one day he resolved not to spare him. Seeing him, therefore, in an ill humour, " Quintus," said the King, " I am strongly tempted to write " your life."—" As you please, Sire," answered the other: " I am not afraid

" of any thing."—" That is as it may " happen," said the King: " suppose, " for example, I should begin with " these words: There was one Guis- " chard, the son of a potter of Mag- " debourg." — " Well, Sire, from " the potter to the porcelain mer- " chant there is only one step." Every body knows that the King of Prussia had established a manufactory of porcelain, which was sold for his advantage. The Prince, a little offended, proceeded: " It happened that " this Guischard had the honour of " being admitted to a familiar inter- " course with the King, wholly unwor- " thy of it as he was."—" So much " the worse, Sire, for the King who " admitted him to it." All the guests were astonished at the boldness of Quintus. " Furthermore," continued the King, " though he had never seen an " engagement, he had the command

" of three battalions; with which he " did not engage the enemy, but pil- " laged and robbed."—" Oh! as for " that, Sire, you know that we di- " vided the spoils between us." He alluded chiefly to the affair of Count de Bruhl. The King understood him, but every body else was ignorant of his meaning. The King knit his brows, and every one present was embarrassed. At last, after some sharp sallies, followed by repartees as keen, the King concluded by saying: " Well, Quin- " tus, what do you say? am I not a " good historian?"—" Faith, Sire, if I " must tell you frankly, kings are gene- " rally but indifferent authors: they " would do much better to occupy " themselves with the government of " their states, and leave literature alone; " for it is very rare that they succeed in " it." At these last words all the company cast their eyes down upon their

plates, and did not venture to look at the King. They expected, every moment, to see Quintus thrown out at the window: the King, however, subdued the anger which he really felt. This was at the conclusion of the repast. The company rose from the table, and went into an adjoining room to take coffee; with the exception of Quintus Icilius, who retired to his apartment. The King, not seeing him, asked, "Where is "Quintus Icilius? Does not he come "to take coffee?" They answered, that he had retired. "What!" said he, "is he affronted? Let some one go "to look for him, and let every thing "be forgotten." They went to Quintus, but he refused to come. The King sent the Abbé Bastiani, to tell him that he positively insisted upon seeing him. He still refused: "Tell the King," said he "that if he wishes to have buf-"foons at his table, he should pay them

"better." (The King, allowed him a pension of two hundred guineas.) The Abbé Bastiani entreated him to reflect upon the consequences of such an answer; but he persisted in it, and would send no other: and the Abbé, though he was his friend, was obliged to convey it to the King; who only laughed at it, saying, "He will be in a "better humour to-morrow." The next day, at four o'clock in the morning, Quintus Icilius left the palace of Sans Souci, and went to Potsdam. The King, being informed of the circumstance when he arose, was really offended: however, he did not suffer his vexation to appear.

Some time having elapsed, Quintus wrote to the King to beg that he would allow him to marry. He did not return any answer. Quintus sent another letter, which was equally ineffectual. He wrote six letters without the King's

deigning to take any notice of them. At last, in reply to the seventh, the King wrote to him: "Quintus, you "have offended me exceedingly; how- "ever, if you will renounce marriage "I pardon you, and restore you to "my favour." To this letter Quintus replied: "Sire, I ask no other favour "from your Majesty, than permission "to marry." The King granted him permission, but would never see him again.

It was a short time after this event that I arrived at Potsdam. I dined at the house of Quintus Icilius with his lady, who appeared to be very amiable. He himself related to me most of the above circumstances, which were afterwards confirmed by the Lord Mareschal and the Abbé Bastiani. He told me, that he had also solicited permission to retire to the estates of his wife: but that the King would never suffer him

to leave Potsdam; so that he was, in fact, a prisoner in that city. I learnt, three years after, that he had been restored to the King's favour; but without enjoying the same confidence which he had formerly possessed. He died some years after this, and the King appeared greatly affected at his loss. He said to one of his generals: "See how my friends "leave me: the time approaches, "when you and I shall follow their "example; you will leave me, or "I shall leave you." He wrote to the widow of Quintus, to console her: he made her a present of three thousand crowns, secured to her a pension of twelve hundred, took upon himself the education of her children, and purchased the library and cabinet of medals belonging to her late husband, for which he paid her the full value.

CHAPTER XIII.

Lord Mareschal. — Count Hoditz. — Baron de Polnitz.

We dined almost every day with the Lord Mareschal: who was then eighty-five years old; and was still as vigorous as ever, both in body and mind. The King had given him a house adjoining the garden of Sans Souci, and frequently went thither to see him: he had excused himself from dining with him, having found that his health would not allow him to sit long at table; and he was, of all those who had enjoyed the favour of the King, the only one who could truly be called his friend, and who was sincerely attached to his person. The King, who was alive to friendship, had remarked in his Lordship this disposition towards him; and

had set so much value upon it, that there never was any person for whom he shewed so much regard, deference, and friendship. Of course every body paid court to him: he was called the King's friend, and he was the only one who had merited that title; for he had always stood well with him, without having flattered him.

One day, when we were dining with his Lordship, he received a visit from a great Silesian nobleman, Count Hoditz; who had entertained the King, when he passed through Silesia, on his way to see the Emperor. He had received him in a most extraordinary manner; much in the same style as, we are told, the ancient knights were received by the fairies of romance. In a walk which he took with the King in his park, Fauns and Dryads were seen coming out of the wood, who amused him by their dances and their

sports; and when he wished to dine, a table, completely furnished, arose out of the earth. Nymphs did the honours of the wood, and Fauns waited at table. When he left him, the King said: "Count Hoditz, I hope you will "come to see me at Potsdam. I can- "not receive you so elegantly as you "have received me, but I will do my "best." He was a man of great understanding, frank, cheerful, and always saying the most agreeable things to the King. He had a considerable estate in Silesia, which divided the possessions of the Emperor and the King of Prussia, and which was independent of both. One day, when the King was shewing him the improvements he had made at Sans Souci, he said to him: "You see that piece of land: it be- "longed to my gardens; but to make "the form of them more regular, I "have drawn a straight line, and have

" given to my neighbour all that is out-
" side of the line. I have made a
" road, leading to his house, which
" has cost him nothing ; and I am now
" going to build him a wall at my own
" expence."—" Ah ! Sire," said the Count, " I see it is a good thing for a
" *subject* to be your neighbour."

It cannot be said that there was a Court at Potsdam. The King was served only by his officers and his soldiers ; his *aides-de-camp* were his gentlemen of the chamber, and grenadiers his *valets-de-chambre*. There was one of these latter in whom he placed the utmost confidence. He had given him a palace, which he had built upon the plan of Whitehall at London ; yet as this man's duty kept him always about the King, he did not lodge in it ; but kept a low woman there, to whom he was attached ; and who was lodged like a Queen, while he slept in a loft at the

side of the King's chamber. The same grenadier held the privy-purse of the King, and kept a secretary for that department; and as he accompanied the King in all his travels, his place was upon the coachbox, and his secretary followed in a chaise.

The King of Prussia amused himself with imitating the famous edifices of antiquity. At Potsdam are seen the Pantheon, the Coliseum, the Basilick of Antoninus, and the Temple of Tivoli; upon a less scale it is true, but large enough to give a very good idea of them. He has also built some churches. There was one, the front of which did not please him: he rebuilt it more to his taste, but this front admitted too little light into the church, and the rector and his parishioners made representations to him upon the subject, but to no purpose. He also erected a very handsome building for a town-hall. The

mayor of Potsdam thinking himself a great man, and sometimes amusing the King by his importance, his Majesty placed his statue on the top of the building, as Atlas supporting the globe; and the mayor, who did not perceive the King's satire, came to thank him for the honour he had done to him.

We visited Berlin, where we remained eight days. I found it one of the handsomest cities of Europe, and greatly embellished by the edifices which the King had built there. The arsenal and the opera-house particularly are in the best style of architecture. The opera-house is dedicated to Apollo, by this inscription: *Divo Apollini.* In the evening we were presented to the Queen of Prussia, Prince Henry, and all the royal family. It was proposed to play at cards; but I preferred observing the manners of the Court, which was not very brilliant. I was

surprised at seeing old Baron de Polnitz there, whose letters and memoirs I had read thirty years before: he was first chamberlain to the Queen. I conversed some time with him, and he appeared to be a man of great wit and politeness. He died the year following.

I also found there M. de la Grange, who was very well satisfied with his situation. He was enabled to devote his whole time to mathematics and algebra: and enjoyed a liberty which he had not at Turin; that of avowing his sentiments upon religion, which he treated altogether as a fable. This was a frequent subject of dispute with us at Turin, for there are no greater polemics than the infidels. I asked him how matters of religion went on at Berlin, and whether he had the pleasure of disputing now and then upon the subject. He answered, that it was a point of so much indifference in that

country, that nobody ever thought of making it the topic of conversation. He introduced me to the most remarkable literary men of Berlin; and among others to M. Formey, who was always writing, or rather compiling, for the booksellers. He told me very honestly, that he worked so many hours a day; and that when he had gained his ducat, he left off work.

Our design was to go to Petersburg by way of Warsaw; but we found so much difficulty in crossing Poland, on account of the different detachments of confederates who possessed all the roads, that I did not dare to risk undertaking the journey. Besides, the Duchess of Northumberland wrote to me that she was coming into Germany; and was very desirous that I should appoint some place of meeting, where she might see her son. I sent her word,

that we should be at Cologne on the 26th of April; and I took measures for arriving there exactly on that day.

We set out for Brunswick on the 13th of April, 1771; and we found that Gustavus III. King of Sweden had just arrived there. The Duke of Brunswick, who had married his aunt, the sister of the King of Prussia, was wholly occupied in preparing for his reception. This Prince was returning in haste from Paris, where he had received the unexpected news of the death of his father. Though it might have been supposed that that event would have induced him to quit the Court of France immediately, he, on the contrary, prolonged his stay there a month; and employed that time in forming a treaty of alliance and subsidy with the Court of Versailles, and in preparing the revolution which he af-

terwards so happily accomplished in his kingdom. The conversations which he had at Paris, and the intrigues of the French ambassador at Stockholm, were not unserviceable to his design.

CHAPTER XIV.

Brunswick.—King of Sweden: Character of that Prince.—History of Baron Trenck.

I HAD a letter of recommendation for M. de Féronce; a man of great talents, and high in favour with the hereditary Prince of Brunswick. I had scarcely sent him my letter, when he wrote to me, that if we chose to go to Court, he would present us immediately, without loss of time. He introduced us to the Duke of Brunswick, the hereditary Prince, and the hereditary Princess, who was sister to the King of England. We were invited to dine at the table of the Duke of Brunswick, in company with the King of Sweden; so that within two hours after our arrival, we were

actually dining at Court. I do not know such another instance of expedition. After dinner, I had the honour of being presented to the King of Sweden, as a man who had seen the principal Courts of Europe. The King asked me many questions relative to the characters of the different Princes to whom I had had the honour of being introduced; and when I related to him some instances of the despotic power of the King of Naples, or the King of Sardinia, he always interrupted me, saying, "We Kings of the North, or "rather we republican Kings, could "not have dared to act in that manner." It seemed to me however, from all the sentiments which he discovered, that he had already meditated upon the design of imitating them. He appeared to possess the love of glory, and to be desirous of meriting it by governing his people with wisdom. He paid

great attention to what I told him of the affability of the King of Sardinia towards all those who desired an audience of him; and of the regular hours which he had devoted to that purpose, morning and evening, for thirty years, when he received every body, without distinction, in his cabinet, from the lord to the peasant; by which he had gained the confidence and love of his subjects of every degree. This circumstance seemed to make an impression upon the King of Sweden: I remarked it at the time; and I know further, that six months afterwards he established this custom at his own Court; and that it was one of the means, and not the least effectual, which he employed for gaining the hearts of his people, and disposing them to see with pleasure the astonishing change which he effected in Sweden. Historians have given the details of that revolution; I will, however, mention the principal events.

The Senate of Sweden had seized into their own hands the power of the government; and had so limited that of the King, that he not only could not act as a sovereign, but was in a situation not very different from that of honourable imprisonment. They had carried their audacity to such a height, as to require that he should even open his letters in presence of some of their body. Driven to extremities by these vexations, insupportable for a Prince who had so much elevation of mind, the King began to take measures accordingly. He succeeded in obtaining for his brothers the command of the two strongest places of the kingdom; and agreed with them, that they should gain over the troops, and render themselves masters of them. In this they were successful. As soon as this news was received at Stockholm, the Senate assembled; but while they were delibe-

rating upon what was necessary to be done, and some were even proposing to arrest the King, he instantly began his operations. He went to the regiment of Guards: and after representing to them in a few words, but in the strongest and most affecting manner, the cruel situation in which he had been placed by the tyranny of the senate, which also extended to the rest of his subjects, he asked them if they would assist him in the just design he had formed of restoring order and justice in the government; and concluded by calling upon those who loved him to declare in his favour. A silence, terrible to a Prince in that situation, for a moment reigned among the officers of the regiment; and he has since declared to some of his friends, that that instant of silence appeared an age to him. He repeated the same proposal a second time; when an offi-

cer, coming out from the regiment, fell on his knee, and was quickly followed by others. The first use the King made of the favourable moment of zeal which they shewed for him, was to surround the senate which was then assembled, and to arrest every member. He afterwards easily prevailed upon the other troops which were in the city and its environs to declare for him: and in a few days placed the government upon so different a basis, that the power was almost wholly in his own person; and his authority is since as extensive and as well established, as that of almost any other Prince in Europe. He shortly afterwards wrote to the Countess de Boufflers, for whom he justly entertained the highest esteem, informing her of the particulars of this revolution. I have seen the letter, as well as several others which he wrote to that lady, with whom he had many conversations

concerning the affairs of his kingdom. They were all extremely well written; and breathed nothing but that spirit of justice, courage, and goodness, which characterised this monarch. I consider the honour I had of being in his company during his stay at Brunswick, as one of the most flattering events of my life.

It was usual at that time to go to Court at noon, and at one o'clock we sat down to dinner. The Duke's table consisted of forty covers; and in an adjoining hall was another of sixty covers, of which the grand-marshal did the honours. After dinner we conversed, or sometimes walked; and at night, either played or resumed conversation: and I had thus an opportunity of making these observations upon the character of the King of Sweden. I will now return to the Court of Brunswick.

The Duke of Brunswick had an

amiable simplicity of manners, and was by no means deficient in either wit or information. In his youth he had received lessons from the celebrated Leibnitz. He loved parade, and was as fond of play; and these two passions had so deranged his finances, that the States of Brunswick had already paid his debts twice, and were now upon the point of doing so a third time.

The Duchess of Brunswick was quite proud of being the sister of so great a man as the King of Prussia; and imagined herself to derive, from that circumstance, a superior mind and profound policy. The hereditary Princess saw that the Duchess had not spoken to me. "Leave it to me," said she one day: "you will see that she will take "notice of you after dinner; but have "all your wits about you, for you will "have enough to do to answer her." In fact, while we were taking coffee,

the Duchess of Brunswick approached me, and entered into conversation with me about her brother; about the manner in which I had praised him, and the circumstances which had attended my being presented to him: and then all at once turning to a different subject, she asked me what I thought of the *Monades* of Leibnitz. Learned as I had been told she was, I did not expect to have seen her take so high a flight; but I was not disconcerted by the question. I told her that I had found that the *Monades* of Leibnitz bore a great affinity with the numbers of Pythagoras. I developed my idea, and explained how both philosophers had given different names to things to which they attributed the same properties. My proposition appeared to her both ingenious and new; and whether she understood me or not, she at least appeared to do so, and afterwards

spoke continually of the depth of my learning.

Cards were introduced every night after supper, at the Duchess of Brunswick's; who did me the honour to propose to me to join the party of the King of Sweden at *Vingt-un*. But as I judged that my purse was not well enough furnished to play with a King who had just received six millions in France, I begged leave to be excused: and was fully recompensed for the loss of that honour, by a conversation of three hours, upon interesting subjects, with the hereditary Prince; whose affable and polite manners, and whose highly penetrating and enlightened mind, rendered him one of the most amiable Princes of Europe. It was thought, at that time, that he did not live upon good terms with the hereditary Princess, but a circumstance now proved to me the contrary: for when I went to pay my respects to

her the next morning, she told me that I had made her lose two hours sleep the night before; as the Prince would not let her close her eyes, till he had related to her, word for word, the conversation he had had with me. I had thus every reason to be flattered with the gracious reception I met with at Brunswick, particularly on the part of the hereditary Prince and Princess; and in a letter which M. Féronce wrote to me after my departure, their Highnesses did me the honour to desire him to let me know, that they would be happy if I would return to make a longer stay at their Court.

We reached Cologne on the 26th of April; the Duchess of Northumberland arrived there an hour before us, so well had we taken our measures on both sides. The Duchess thought her son much improved, and did me the honour to attribute all the merit to me. She

gave me a letter from the Duke of Northumberland, who testified the utmost regret at the disappointment I had met with on his account: as the Duke had lately joined the party in opposition; and exactly at that time, the benefice of a thousand pounds a year, which the King had promised me, became vacant. As I was attached to the Duke, the minister imagined that the surest method of vexing him was, not only to disappoint me of the benefice, but to give it to a man who had rendered himself obnoxious to the Duke by having written against him. The Duke of Northumberland was fully sensible that my connection with his family had subjected me to this loss: he therefore assured me, in his letter, that he should not be easy till he had repaired the injury I had sustained; and that the first use he should make of his influence, if he re-

gained it, would be in my favour. The Duchess gave me the same assurances; but so far from having the least regret on that account, I employed all my reasoning to persuade them, that I was more vexed at seeing my hopes frustrated through the part which they had taken in the affair, than from any thing I should have felt upon my own account.

We accompanied the Duchess of Northumberland to Aix-la-Chapelle; where we remained some days, to see the curiosities of that city, formerly the favourite residence of the Emperor Charlemagne: but of all the objects that I saw there, none attracted my attention so much as an Austrian officer with whom I became acquainted.

This officer was called the Baron de Trenck. At the time of the first war between the King of Prussia and the House of Austria, being young and

enterprising, he offered himself, with a small band of determined men, to carry off the King of Prussia, when he went out from his camp to reconnoitre the position of the Austrians. In fact, he did attempt the enterprise; but succeeded so ill, that he was taken prisoner himself, and condemned to perpetual confinement in the castle of Magdebourg. The treatment he received was equally singular and cruel. He was chained, standing against the wall; so that, for several years, he could neither sit nor lie down. His guards had orders not to let him sleep more than a certain time; very short, but long enough to prevent his strength from being entirely exhausted. He remained four or five years in this dreadful situation; after which, there being reason to fear that he could not live long in that state, he was chained in such a manner that he might sit down, which appeared to

him to be a great alleviation of his sufferings. He told me himself, that after having suffered severe illness during the first years of his imprisonment, his constitution, which was strong and robust, was so unbroken, that he recovered his health; and though he received no other sustenance than bread and water, yet he was remarkably well, and resumed his former gaiety. In this state of mind he found means to sooth the tedium of so long an imprisonment, by making verses; which he set to music as well as he could, and sung for half the day. As he had nothing worse to dread, the King of Prussia was frequently the subject of his songs, and was not spared in them. He also had recourse to the power of his imagination, to sooth the horrors of his situation; and the whole time that he did not spend in singing, was passed in turning his ideas to all the agreeable conditions which it was

possible for him to conceive. He was almost brought to consider these wanderings of his imagination as realities, and to regard his misfortunes as mere dreams. At last the Empress Queen, who for a long time had believed that he was dead, being informed of his miserable existence, solicited his liberty from the King of Prussia with so much earnestness, that she obtained his release. I saw him at Aix-la-Chapelle, enjoying very good health; having married a handsome woman, the daughter of one of the principal inhabitants of that imperial city, to which he had retired that he might not be exposed to the power of any arbitrary government. He has published several German works, some of which are the fruits of the reflections he made during the time of his imprisonment; some poetry against the King of Prussia; and some

details relative to the manner in which he passed his time at Magdebourg. He gave them to me himself; and though his works had no great merit in the style, yet the singularity of his thoughts, and the extraordinary fate of the author, rendered them interesting. What astonished me most in him, was the force of mind, the courage, and the constancy, which had supported him in a situation in which there was no hope of his seeing better days. He appeared now to have forgotten the whole; or recalled the remembrance of his past sufferings, only that he might the better enjoy the happiness of his present condition. He was very gay; and there were even moments when one might have supposed, without doing him great injustice, that his reason had been in some degree affected by his long confinement: but it was only surprising

that this did not appear in a more eminent degree. *

We determined to visit Holland during the *kermes*, or fair, which is held at the Hague in the month of May, and which lasts six weeks. That season is the most brilliant at Court, and it is also the most favourable for the country. The fields are delightful. I was then witness to a circumstance I could not otherwise have believed, respecting the price of flowers in Holland; I saw four hundred and seventy-five guineas offered and refused for a hyacinth. It was, to be sure, the most charming flower that ever was seen: it belonged to a florist of Haarlem, and another florist offer-

* Poor Trenck, wishing to take a part in the French Revolution, went to Paris in the year 1793, and was guillotined, on the 25th of July, 1794, two days before the execution of Robespierre.

ed this price for it. The reason which the owner of it gave me for refusing the offer was, that his hyacinth was known to all the amateurs of Europe, and that he sold the bulbs every year for more than the interest of five hundred guineas. These bulbs produced the same sort of flower, in all its beauty.

The court of the Prince and Princess of Orange appeared very agreeable and gay, though it was graced by few handsome women. The Dutch, in general, have bad teeth; whether from the effect of the climate, or from the little care they take of them, I cannot tell. It is no uncommon thing to see young people of twenty-five, who have lost half their set of teeth; and others who have none at all. We were presented at court. Every morning there was a public breakfast, at which the

Prince and Princess of Orange were present; and at night there was either a ball or a play.

We visited the whole of Holland, Flanders, and Brabant; and returned to London with the Duchess of Northumberland.

At my arrival, the Duke expressed the same satisfaction that the Duchess had done respecting his son; and the same regret as he expressed in his letter, relative to the disappointment of which he had been the cause, and by which I lost a thousand pounds a year. Some days after, he renewed his promises of embracing the first opportunity of making me amends; and concluded the compliment by giving me a draft for a thousand pounds sterling upon his banker. Five years afterwards he was reconciled with the court: I waited ten years, continuing to live

with him as usual; and nothing was ever said, of either recompence or indemnity.

END OF THE THIRD PART.

MEMOIRS

OF A

TRAVELLER.

PART IV.

CHAPTER I.

Journey to Spa and Paris.—Characters of the Mesdames de Boufflers.—Stay at Paris.

THE Duke of Northumberland took me to pass part of the summer with him and the Duchess at their estate in Northumberland, where he had immense possessions. A third of that county belongs to him; and if his other estates in Yorkshire and Middlesex are taken into the calculation, it may be said

that he possesses more than a hundredth part of all the lands in the kingdom. Alnwick Castle, which he has completely rebuilt, is a vast and magnificent edifice, richly furnished, where he lives in all the splendour of a sovereign. As I was not displeased with pomp and grandeur, and was treated as a favourite in the house, I gave myself up to this family with all the attachment which the most decided fondness could inspire. The Duchess wished to make a tour through Scotland: I accompanied her thither; and left her only to pay a visit to my worthy benefactor Mr. Mackenzie, who received me with open arms. I then returned to London. The Duchess of Northumberland was extremely desirous to persuade the Duke to attend her to Spa, and could prevail upon him in no other way than by inducing me to offer myself as their companion. I concurred

in the project; my offers decided him, and we set out the following summer to pass the season in that charming place.

Spa is, without exception, the most agreeable resort of the best company in Europe: it is frequented as well for amusement as for health; and as every thing is extremely dear during the season, scarcely any body is to be seen there except those who can support the requisite expence; which is very considerable, and of course prevents many people of limited fortunes from going thither. Several persons of the highest rank in Europe were there at that time; and amongst the most distinguished were the Princess Esterhazi of Vienna; the Princess Poniatowski, sister-in-law to the King of Poland; Lady Spencer, and her daughter (since the Duchess of Devonshire); the Countess of Egmont, daughter of the Maré-

chal de Richelieu; and the Countess de Boufflers, whom I was delighted to meet.

She had come to Spa for the benefit of the health of her daughter-in-law, the Countess Amelia de Boufflers, who had married her son. I do not think that Nature ever produced a more singular compound than this young lady: she had a most elegant figure; agreeable features; a beautiful complexion; and an infantine, soft, and ingenuous air, under which was hidden the best-disguised cunning. She was equally artless, and full of stratagem: she possessed natural wit, which was aided by a happy and wholly original mode of expression, and a subtilty of reasoning which would confound the most experienced logician. Her voice was charming; she sung with great taste, and played upon the harp with exquisite grace. She seemed to be passionately fond of her mother-

in-law, and yet caused her the most lively sorrow. The Queen once asked her which she loved most, her mother or her mother in-law: for some time she refused to answer; but at last, being pressed to tell which she would go to save if she saw them both drowning, she said: "I would go to save my "mother, and to be drowned with my "mother-in-law." Speaking one day of her husband, in no very respectful terms, before the Countess de Boufflers, the latter asked her if she had forgotten that she was talking of her son. "Ah!" replied the Countess Amelia quickly, "I always think that he is "only your son-in-law."

I had the happiness of pleasing the Countess Amelia by my conversation the first time I saw her; and this delighted the Countess de Boufflers, because it gave me an opportunity of being always with her. At six o'clock in

the morning I went to drink the waters with these ladies; I attended them in their walks; I escorted them to the assembly; and if they remained at home, I kept them company.

The stay which I made at Spa increased the partiality which I had before entertained for the Countess de Boufflers. She gave me many proofs of her kindness; and invited me to come and see her at Paris, and to take up my residence in her house. I promised that I would. I continued, however, some time longer with the Duke and Duchess of Northumberland: I went with them to Paris: and when they returned to England, took leave of them; and resolved to remain with the Countess de Boufflers, whose acquaintance and friendship afforded me an opportunity I had long desired, of mixing with the fashionable society of France, to which I was almost wholly a stranger.

I shall pass over in silence a short visit I made to London, which presents nothing remarkable to my memory, to come to the long stay I afterwards made in France with Madame de Boufflers and her friends.

The fashionable world at Paris is divided into two classes *; the first of which is formed of the nobility, and the second is composed of farmers-general† and lawyers. Those of the second class who are eminent for their great riches or distinguished merit, are admitted into some particular circles of the first class, and consider this as a great honour. They take the utmost pains to render themselves worthy of it (particularly the financiers), by keeping open house for such of the nobility as

* This was written in 1777.

† Persons who farmed the produce of particular taxes, and of course had the charge of collecting them as profitably as they could for themselves.

choose to favour them with their company; and these latter make pretty free use of this disposition. Among others, there were two houses at Paris upon that footing; that of M. de Traidaine, and that of M. de la Reyniere. Nobody can imagine the trouble and the money which it cost them to induce people of rank to come and sup at their houses: and when any lady of high fashion condescended to say that she would go on such a day, it is wonderful what pains they would take to procure such company as would be agreeable to her; and how delighted they would be, if she invited half a dozen of her friends to be of the party. The recompence they received was, to hear that such a Duke or Duchess had highly extolled the elegance of their table; but if they were ever admitted into the houses of these very people of quality who had been so well received by them, they found

their treatment quite different, particularly if any other company were there to whom they were not known. They were then received with an air so uncourteous and so humiliating, that they seemed to feel that they were out of their proper sphere, and were glad to get away without experiencing contempt. I was a spectator of this farce three winters, which I passed in various classes of society at Paris; and was not a little amused by the insolence of the one, and the absurdity of the other.

The Court, and the houses of the Princes of the Blood in town, are the sources where what is called the true *ton* of elegant company may be learnt, and where the fashions originate. When I was in Paris, the Palais Royal and the Hôtel de Bourbon were the most refined and the most frequented sources of fashion. Those ladies and

gentlemen who wished to preserve the reputation of leaders of the mode, were obliged to pay their court at these places to sanction their caprices: thence every new and whimsical fashion sprung, which extended in proportion to the degree of influence possessed by the inventress or the inventor; and happy was she or he, whose superior genius had given birth to one, which was generally adopted before it was succeeded by another. The great point on these occasions was to strike, to take by surprise, the attention of the public. I recollect an occurrence of this nature, which almost occasioned the death of two young ladies by vexation: it was at the time when high head-dresses and large feathers were worn.

The Duchess de F * * * and the Viscountess de L * * * were, of all the young ladies of the Court, those

whose imagination was the most fertile in the invention of new fashions, and whose figures were best adapted for displaying them to advantage. One day the Duke de Chartres and the Duke de Lauzun having seen the carriage of those ladies at a milliner's door, waited in the neighbourhood till they went away: when they entered the house, and succeeded so well, by persuasions and presents, that they prevailed upon the milliner to tell them the object of the ladies' visit; and learning that they intended to bring out a new head-dress next day at the opera, which could not fail of producing a wonderful effect, they ordered two others to be made exactly similar, for which it may be readily supposed they paid very handsomely. The box immediately facing that in which these ladies were to sit, was taken for the purpose; and two women of the town were hired to ap-

pear in it exactly at the same moment when the ladies entered their's. What was their astonishment when, instead of attracting the entire attention of the public, they saw all eyes fixed alternately upon the two sides of the house; and perceived opposite to them the counterpart of their head-dress, which excited the laughter and the insulting clamours of the whole company! They were unable to endure the mortification, and withdrew in a great rage. They soon, however, consoled themselves with other inventions, and used greater precaution; but still they were watched by spies. The vigilance of their tormentors, and the treachery of their friends, produced in a short time a second scene similar to the first. I leave the reader to judge of the state of these persecuted belles, whose vexation may be more easily conceived than described.

One word more upon fashion.—I was once at the house of the lady of the Maréchal de Luxembourg, at Montmorency; where all the most elegant men, and the most beautiful women, that the Court or the town could supply, were then present. In France the company seldom meet, in the country, before the evening: some rise late; some do not dine, or dine privately in their apartments: but at night all are full-dressed, and make their appearance in the hall, where the whole company assembles. The invention of the hostess had been for some time busied in preparations, and that day was the precise period when the grand effect of her labours was to be produced. I must confess that I never saw any spectacle more varied, charming, and delightful: it seemed to me that I was in a palace of fairies. There were a dozen figures, each of

which might have deranged the ideas of the most frigid philosopher: there were also several tables for cards; but the chief occupation was, making an exact inspection of every part of each other's dress, which employed the company 'till the night was very far advanced.

It has been said, that the reign of women is at Paris: and the remark is just enough, if it be confined to the Court and the nobility; for it is in that class particularly, that their influence upon the mind is the most striking. They express themselves, in general, with grace and with elegance; and having more leisure than men, they occupy themselves with forming intrigues at Court, with patronising some favourite, propagating new opinions, conducting a law-suit, or supporting a piece at the theatre. They engage in these things with more zeal

and assiduity than men commonly do; and though they may be divided among themselves upon some private quarrel, yet when the general interest of the sex is concerned, they unite in its behalf with an enthusiasm of which men are not capable. This is the case especially when a husband, according to their opinion, does not act as he ought towards his wife; that is, when he does not pay her debts without murmuring, when he is dissatisfied at being ruined by her extravagances, or when he presumes to object to visits which she chooses to receive. I knew a lady whose husband took it into his head to go into his wife's apartment at three o'clock in the morning. He found the lady's lover there, and complained of it. She demanded a separation, and obtained it; while the husband was condemned and driven from society. One day, when I was asking some questions

on the subject, of some ladies of her acquaintance, they told me that it was true that the affair had happened as was stated; but that the husband was a brute, who knew nothing of the world, and that he had been hooted out of all company.

I also knew a handsome young woman, the Princess de * * *, who never allowed her husband to come into her apartment. A lady of her acquaintance represented to her the necessity of having children to keep up so illustrious a race: but she never made any other answer than, "Oh! for shame, "Madam, for shame!" and if the other still insisted, continued, "Oh! don't "talk in that way, Madam; I declare "that such language is quite astonish-"ing." If her friend attempted to say any thing more, she was always interrupted, with "Oh! for shame, Ma-"dam, for shame!" and could never obtain any other answer.

The influence of women upon society has always been very powerful in France. A small number of them have given the first impulse; which, extending itself, has formed the public opinion. The manners which I am going to depict, were like principles from which nobody dared deviate, through a dread of ridicule. When we reflect that such was the fact, we must not contemplate the disorders which have taken place in that country with astonishment.

CHAPTER II.

Continuation of the same Subject.—Character of the Prince de Conti.

Among those ladies of the Court who were distinguished for their wit and beauty, the Countess de Boufflers was certainly the most celebrated. No person had so many friends and so few enemies; she united all the gifts of nature and a cultivated mind, with an amiable simplicity of manner, a winning grace, a goodness of heart, and a sensibility which always made her neglect her own concerns to interest herself in the happiness or misfortunes of those who surrounded her. I cannot make my reader better acquainted with her, than by copying her character as it was drawn by a man to whom she had rendered the important service of releas-

ing him from a convent and his vows of celibacy. He dedicated a work to her, without putting her name to the dedication, as she would not permit it. The delicacy and wit which adorn this fragment are well worthy of the subject upon which he treated: he expresses himself thus:—"I dedicate this work to "Her, to whom I owe the most pre- "cious blessing of life, to them who "know how to enjoy it. Distinguished "by rank and birth, she is infinitely "more so by the elevation and the de- "licacy of her sentiments, the brilli- "ancy of her genius, the extent of her "knowledge, the penetration of her "mind, the justice and vigour of her "judgment, the purity and beauty of "her language, and the justness and "elegance of her taste. Without de- "siring it, she is considered at Court, "by the town, in foreign countries, "and in the republic of letters, as one

" of the first women of her nation and
" of the age. Besides the claim which
" she has upon my admiration and my
" gratitude, she has a particular one upon
" this agreeable labour, * undertaken
" under her auspices. I do homage to
" her for it in silence, because I am
" not allowed to do so publicly: those
" who have experienced the sweet
" transport which the recollection of a
" great benefit excites upon such an
" occasion, will not condemn my heart
" for seeking to relieve itself when it
" cannot be satisfied; nor will they
" be surprised to see me add, that
" notwithstanding my regret at being
" obliged to be silent respecting the
" illustrious object of feelings so pro-
" per, so natural, and which only re-
" quire utterance, I sometimes console

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* This was the translation of an English work, the title of which I have forgotten.

" myself by the hope that she will be " known without my running the risk " of being so unfortunate as to dis- " please her."

The author of this dedication was a monk, whom the Countess de Boufflers had met in the garden of a convent which she happened to visit. He availed himself of the opportunity to interest her by the recital of his misfortunes, and of the disgust he had conceived towards his profession. She obtained his release from his vows, took charge of his future fortune, and rendered him the happiest of men by so unexpected a change in his condition.

Madame de Boufflers, upon her entrance into the world, was lady of the bedchamber to the Duchess of Orleans, sister of the Prince de Conti; and that connection was the origin of the attachment which was afterwards formed between her and this Prince. She had not

merely captivated his heart by the graces of her person and the charms of her figure, but had also subdued his mind by the beauties of her own, and by the advantage which he derived from her counsel and her conversation. Thus when the Count de Boufflers died, every one expected that the Prince de Conti would have married his widow. Such a measure was in contemplation for some time; and I have reason to believe that if that lady had insisted upon it, the Prince would have done so: but though the marriage never took place, their connection continued 'till the death of the Prince.

The Prince de Conti was one of the most amiable and of the greatest men of his age; his figure was perfectly handsome, his air noble and majestic, his features fine and regular, his countenance agreeable and intelligent, and

his aspect bold or gentle as occasion required. He spoke well, with a manly and spirited eloquence, and expressed himself on all subjects with great warmth and energy. His dignity of mind, the firmness of his character, his courage, and his abilities, were so well known throughout all Europe, that it is unnecessary for me to speak of them. His hours of familiarity with those he loved, were marked by simplicity; but it was the simplicity of genius. In company, he was the first to banish all constraint; he was so incommoded by it himself, that he frequently shewed his impatience of it. I recollect, that during the early part of the time I had the honour of being admitted to his society, I once happened to be seated, when the Prince de Conti, who was walking about the room, came up to speak to me. I rose immediately to hear what he had to say, and he

repeatedly made a sign for me to sit down again: at last, vexed to see that I did not comply with his wishes, he said to me in a half-angry tone: "Pray Sir, do not give me so much "trouble." He made no distinction of rank in company, yet he fulfilled the duties of politeness himself with more exactness than any one. If any of his friends were confined by sickness, he did not fail to visit them regularly. I saw him go every day, for six weeks, to M. de Pontdevel; and he did not discontinue his visits 'till the last moment. As he supped three or four times a week with the Countess de Boufflers, and as I resided in her house, if he did not see me at supper he sent to inquire after me; and if I was indisposed in my apartment he sometimes came himself.

The Prince de Conti had long enjoyed the confidence of Louis XV., who

consulted him upon all the most important affairs of state. It frequently happened, that by his advice, the King had secret ministers at foreign courts, who, without the knowledge of the Ambassadors, corresponded directly with him. Such was the Chevaliere d'Eon at the Court of Russia: who, upon the recommendation of the Prince de Conti (to whom her sex was not then known), was sent to Petersburg; where she had the address to introduce herself to the Empress Elizabeth in female attire, and, in fifteen days concluded an affair which the Ambassador had been for a long time carrying on. It was the Prince de Conti also who recommended M. de Vergennes to Louis XV., as a man extremely well qualified to serve him at foreign courts. He was in Sweden at the period of the revolution, and was in fact one of the instruments of that change of government.

Having been previously sent to Constantinople, he had excited the Ottoman Porte against Russia, to promote the interests of France in the war which produced the election of the King of Poland.

The Prince de Conti had given brilliant proofs of his courage, in the campaign which he made in Piedmont, where he gained the battle of Coni in 1774. He had afterwards the command of an army in Flanders; and he also took Charleroi. It is true, the capture of that place did not cost much blood. He related to me the following anecdote upon this subject: The siege having continued a longer time than was expected, the Prince was so much afraid of being obliged to raise it, that he began to think of some means of inducing the governor to surrender the place. Fifty thousand crowns were promised to an old valet-de-chambre of

the governor, who had commanded at Charleroi during thirty years, if he could prevail upon his master to give it up. The valet, who had great influence over him, was constantly representing to him that he could not hold out long; and that in surrendering he would have the honour of capitulating to a French Prince of the blood: he mentioned also several other plausible reasons, which the wish of possessing the fifty thousand crowns had suggested to him. "But," replied the governor, "I must be attacked more spiritedly, "and I must seem to have made a "good defence." —"Ah! Sir," said the valet-de-chambre, "have you not re-"tained this place thirty years for the "house of Austria? Can any one make "a better defence?"

Some time after that event, Madame de Pompadour, desirous of shewing her favour to Count de Saxe, resolved to

obtain for him the chief command of the French armies; but she clearly perceived, that while the Prince de Conti had a part of the army in Flanders, this measure would be difficult to accomplish. In order therefore to compel the Prince to retire, she concerted with the minister of war, to have a resolution passed by the council, requiring the union of all the forces; and by extolling the successes and the experience of the Count de Saxe, she prevailed in having it decided that he should command the whole army, and the Prince de Conti was ordered to join him. He felt what would be the consequence of this measure, quitted the army, and resigned his command into the hands of the King: with whom he had a very spirited conversation; during which, Madame de Pompadour, who was present, had the impertinence to interrupt him while he was making some assertion,

by saying: "Do you never lie, Sir?" —"Pardon me, Madam," said he, "sometimes to the ladies;" and turning again towards the King, continued the conversation.

Though his favour was diminished by the resentment which he did not dissemble for the treatment he had received, yet the King esteemed him so much, and was so habitually attached to him, that he had little trouble in obtaining whatever he wished of his Majesty, and even had secret interviews with him. One day, among others, when they were talking of the famous M. de Silhouëtte, the Prince told the King that he was a rogue; the King was convinced of it: "And yet," said the Prince, "you will see that he will one "day be your minister."—"Never," replied the King.—"Well, promise me, "Sire, that if he becomes Comptrol-"ler-general, my affairs shall not be un-

"der his direction." The King promised this. Some time after, the Prince having completely broken with the King, and M. de Silhouëtte being at the same time appointed Comptroller-general, the Prince de Conti wrote to the King, to remind him of his promise of excusing him from applying to the Comptroller-general, and the King kept his word.

The Prince de Conti afterwards evinced the most direct opposition to the measures of the court; and acquired such influence in the parliament of Paris, that no affair of importance passed without his advice. Perfectly acquainted with the French constitution, and supported by a manly and vigorous eloquence, and by the dignity of his rank, he attracted universal applause, and persuaded the other princes of the blood to unite with him: he was thus the defender of the laws, and sustained the

persecution of the ministers in place with unshaken firmness. He was the cause of the parliament's being summoned in 1774, which was the period of his greatest splendour. The young King recalled him to court, where he was admired and caressed: but where he seldom shewed himself, because he did not approve the measures of the new Comptroller-general, M. Turgot; whom he obliged the Court to dismiss, by the oppositions he formed against him. As he went rarely to Versailles, one day when the Queen came to the Opera, the Prince de Conti met her in her way in the corridor. "Ah! You here, Sir?" said her Majesty to him; "what are "you doing here?"—"Madam," answered the Prince, "I am a Parisian, "and am come to see the Queen." Though his health began to decline, his attachment to the fair sex, which had always been his ruling passion, was

not less ardent: perceiving, however, that he did not succeed so well as he had formerly done, he one day said: "It is time for me to retire: formerly "my civilities were taken for declara- "tions of love, but now my declara- "tions of love are taken only for civili- "ties."

CHAPTER III.

Lady Algernon Percy.—Madame de Trudaine and her Society.

About this period Lord Algernon Percy came to Paris with his lady, whom I then saw for the first time. He was very eager to present me to her, being convinced that she had precisely the same qualities which I had always said a woman must possess to make him happy. It was not till after a long acquaintance, that I was able to discover the whole extent of the merit of this amiable and respectable lady; the ornament of her sex, the model for married women, the glory of her own family, (to the dignity of which she had so greatly contributed), and the idol of the illustrious family into which she had entered, and by whom she was cherish-

ed, honoured, and respected. Her example will always serve to reproach those wives who find it difficult to fulfil their duties; those who do not perceive the advantage which results from such conduct, both to themselves and to others; and who do not see, that in making all around them happy, they only promote their own happiness: for it is in this species of labour, as it is with that which is bestowed upon a fruitful soil; which proves beneficial in proportion to the pains bestowed upon it.

Lady Algernon Percy* had an elegant and well-formed figure, an easy carriage, a noble air, agreeable features, and a countenance expressive of all the fine qualities of her mind. To natural cheerfulness she joined great solidity of understanding and the most prudent conduct. She had so excellent

* Now Countess of Beverley.

a heart, that she was by no means rendered haughty by the change in her fortune, but was herself frequently the first to mention it. All these superior qualities were united with a simplicity of manners, and an affability in conversation, which enchanted by their union, and which never failed to make a favourable impression at a first interview. She was one of the four daughters of Mr. Burrell; a gentleman of handsome fortune, of great consideration in his county, and who had given an excellent education to his children. She was at Marseilles with her father, when Lord Algernon was there: he saw her, loved her, and wished to be united to her; and knowing the desire which the Duke and Duchess of Northumberland had to see him married, and convinced that they would allow him to make his own choice, he acquainted them with his attachment for

Miss Burrell, asked their consent to his marriage, and obtained it.

They came immediately to England to conclude the marriage, and the Duke and Duchess soon conceived the most lively tenderness for their daughter-in-law. She constituted their greatest pleasure: her easy wit, her affectionate yet respectful manners, her extreme attention to her husband, the pains and the judgment she shewed in the education of her children; every thing about her was calculated to gain, and in fact did gain, the hearts of all.

Lord Algernon Percy, by this marriage, contributed not only to his own happiness, but to the happiness of several others. Lady Algernon was so generally admired, that attention began to be paid to her sisters. The Duke of Hamilton married one, and Lord Percy (Lord Algernon's elder brother,

now Duke of Northumberland) married the other. Lady Algernon herself assisted in placing her two younger sisters above her. She saw not only without envy, but even without regret, that, by the marriage of one with the heir to the wealth and titles of the house of Percy, her own children might be deprived of the fairest hopes which the subjects of a great kingdom could conceive; and by her example and conversation she constantly maintained good harmony and friendship between the two brothers. I do not flatter Lady Algernon by speaking thus of her: to flatter, is to praise faults, to give a specious and honourable turn to defects. I praise her, it is true; because to praise, is to proclaim the virtues of a person whom we admire. How delightful is it to be able to do so! Happy are those who find opportunities in society of contemplat-

ing closely such merit as that of which I now speak. All England will confirm what I have said; and I am willing to forfeit every title to belief in the other characters which I have drawn and which are not known, if those who are acquainted with Lady Algernon Percy think that I have exaggerated her's.

Lord and Lady Algernon Percy remained only a few days at Paris: she was very far advanced in her first pregnancy, and wished to lie-in in London. I continued my stay in the former capital; where I amused myself by publishing a few works, which had some success. I procured an introduction to some families among the lawyers and farmers-general, from a desire of being well acquainted with all classes of society in Paris; and I may venture to say, that if among them we do not find that sort of society which is termed the high *ton*, we cer-

tainly meet with that which is most reasonable and most natural. Among them we may find many enlightened men, instructive conversation, and mild, engaging, and sociable manners. I exclude from this description those who are infected with the mania of aping their superiors; who, in order to out-vie in ostentation their equals, gratify the ridiculous vanity of being admitted to visit some of the first nobility, by exposing themselves to the mortifying humiliation which pride inflicts upon presumption.

One of the houses among that class which was most frequented, was that of M. de Trudaine. He was intendant of finances; having the department of the farms, bridges, and highways: which made him a sort of minister, and led him to assume the air and importance of one. He wished to strengthen himself by the party of the

self-styled philosophers: he flattered them, and endeavoured to bring them to his house; and as he even sought to be ranked among their greatest favourites, he received the nick-name of the *'prentice philosopher*.

Madame de Trudaine might have been thought to possess talents, if she had not affected to be above what she called the prejudices of the age. This singularity had perverted a judgment, which frequently displayed itself upon occasions unconnected with that notion. She had some taste, great sensibility, yielded easily to professions of friendship, and was frequently duped by them. She took all imaginable pains to render her house agreeable; and to draw the best company of Paris, among the men, to her parties. Two grand dinners a week, which she took the trouble to arrange, and a supper every night, secured her a society

which was in fact the more interesting, as it was so diversified: Dukes and Peers, Ambassadors and other foreigners of distinction, the first nobility, the single gentlemen, poets, men of letters, lawyers, and financiers, were all attracted by the wit and talents which were met with there. Fools were rare among them; because, finding themselves out of their element, they naturally kept away: so that this house was one where the most solid and the most interesting conversation was to be heard. Only one thing was disagreeable: the mistress of the house, though she talked very little herself, and was satisfied with listening, frequently assumed such a disdainful air, as silenced those who were not prepared for such an auditor. Still, however, Madame de Trudaine was amiable, and every one was anxious to be

noticed by her. I myself was one of the most assiduous visitors at her house, and was perhaps one of those who stood tolerably well in her opinion.

CHAPTER IV.

Singular Adventure of a Lady who was restored to Life.

MADAME de Trudaine, whose health was very delicate, perceived too well the indifference which the greater part of those who came to her house felt for her. Lying upon a couch in the corner of the room, I have frequently seen her overcome by the excessively warm disputes of those who attended her suppers. A bow, a cold compliment, being once made on entering, every one was eager to be informed of the news of the day, or of what was passing in Paris at the time. They disputed, they grew warm, five or six voices were heard at once without being understood; while the poor lady's aching head was almost distracted with

their noise. She one day whispered to me: "I have, for ten years, taken great "pains to render my house agreeable, "and to make friends: as to the re- "gard and concern that any one feels "for me, you see how well I have "succeeded." Tired, at last, of being treated in this manner, and of being the victim of her own cares and complaisance, she resolved to keep her room; but her house was still open to all Paris. People came to sup there, and went away without seeing her; some few excepted, whom she sent for to keep her company, and I was one of this number. She was fond of anecdotes: I had collected many in my travels. She was also fond of characters and descriptions; and as I had seen many originals, I fortunately had a considerable fund of amusement for her.

M. de la Mothe, her physician, a man of wit, who told a very good

story, sometimes came to dine with her; and amused her by the recital of certain extraordinary facts, with which, in the course of his profession, he had become acquainted. I recollect one, in particular, which appeared to me so interesting, that I committed it to writing on the very day of his relating it to us. He only took the precaution to recommend us not to speak of it at Paris, lest some of the persons whom the anecdote either directly or indirectly concerned might hear it. He told us, that having frequent occasion to visit a sick person, he accidentally met three or four times, upon the stairs or in the court, a young lady of fashion who was very handsome, and who occupied the second floor of the same house; she even spoke to him one day to inquire after the sick person whom he visited, and she then appeared to

be in the bloom of health. What was his surprise to learn, the next day, that she had died suddenly! Not being able to persuade himself, that a person who appeared to enjoy such perfect health should have died in that manner, he requested to see her; and in fact found her covered with a pall, and a priest praying at her side. He examined her; she was cold, without pulse and breathless. He tried several methods to di scover whether she really was dead, and had recourse to the means which are employed to revive drowned or suffocated persons: but all was in vain. The husband and the relations had already left the house. He inquired whether there was any person in whom she had particularly confided, and he was told that there was—her maid. He desired that she might immediately be found. She came; he

took her aside, and asked her if her mistress had not indulged a violent attachment for some person.—"Sir, my "mistress was a most virtuous woman, "and was very fond of her husband."—"Recollect," said the physician, "that "the life of your mistress is now con- "cerned: I can scarcely believe that "she is actually dead; this accident "may be only an hysteric lethargy. "Confess the truth to me; and if "you love your mistress, assist my en- "deavours."—"Sir," said the woman, looking at him with an embarrassed air, "I have nothing to tell you." He saw by her manner that there was some great mystery in the business, and was confirmed in his opinion that the lady was not dead. He went back to her, and renewed his efforts for her recovery. With great difficulty he made her swallow some drops of *eau-de-luce* and wa-

ter; and a moment after, he felt her pulse beat. He redoubled the dose; she began to stretch herself and to yawn, and at length recovered her senses. All the servants the friends of the family, transported with joy, now ran into the room, which was soon filled. She was in danger of relapsing into the same state; on which the physician sent them allaway, and remained alone with her maid. The young lady, however looked at them with astonishment, inquired into the meaning of so much bustle, and desired to know what had happened to her. The physician looked steadfastly at her: "You have very "strong passions, Madam," said he, "and you suffer them to have too much "influence over you."—"Oh, unfor- "tunate being that I am!" said she, turning towards her maid: "have you "betrayed me?"—"Madam," an-

swered the woman, " I have said no-
" thing; but I believe that physicians
" are conjurors."—" Be easy, Madam,"
said the good physician to her: " your
" secret is not known, it is only sus-
" pected: but after the interest which
" I have shewn for you, Madam, do
" I not deserve that you should place
" some confidence in me; and that you
" should enable me to continue to be
" of service to you, by making me bet-
" ter acquainted with the cause of your
" illness?" She answered only by a flood of tears. She continued weeping for an hour, and was greatly relieved. At last, half guessing and half explaining the little which she said, the physician completely discovered the cause of what had happened to her.

The young lady, who was about twenty-four years old, had been four years married to a man of fashion, who

adored her, and who flattered himself that he was beloved by her. He had introduced to her his dearest friend, who had been brought up with him from infancy, and who afterwards lived almost constantly with them. This friend, who had too much sensibility, could not defend himself against the charms of the young wife. He condemned his passion, and could not bear the idea of disburbing the happiness of an union so perfect. He did not, however, absent himself from the object of his passion; but thought that he should be able to conceal his love, even from her who had inspired it, or at least that he should be silent. He was deceived: the young lady was not long ignorant that he was combating between love and duty. She pitied him most sincerely; and was much affected to perceive him, in love, virtuous, and unfor-

tunate: but took the greatest pains to conceal from him that she was sensible of his condition. By degrees, pity gave birth to sentiments at which she was alarmed. She then wished to conceal them from herself: she was in despair; she did not dare to unbosom herself to any one; she did not know what conduct to adopt to avoid her lover, without giving offence to her husband. A year passed in this painful situation, both perceiving the impression which they had made upon each other, and both endeavouring to stifle it, without being able to determine upon a separation, which was the only measure that could have been of service to them. At length, one day, when they were in the country, and the husband was from home hunting, they found themselves alone, and entered into a conversation which was the more inter-

esting as it had been so long restrained. They could no longer conceal the sentiments which they had for each other; but at the same moment that she acknowledged her love, she conjured him not to abuse her candour, but to find some plausible pretext for absenting himself from her. He sometimes seemed resolved to do so. She allowed him to postpone the execution of his design. However, he found himself frequently alone with her; and notwithstanding the virtuous sentiments which animated them both, opportunity triumphed: in a word, honour and duty were forgotten in one unfortunate moment; and from that day, remorse, grief, and depression, took possession of the heart of the unfortunate young lady. She now could no longer support the presence of her husband. She still sometimes indulged the freedoms of her

lover, but not without the most bitter reproaches upon herself. She experienced a tyrannical sentiment, mixed with much bitterness and but little sweetness. Even jealousy crept in: she thought herself neglected by him for whom she had sacrificed so much. Though she wished for the termination of this criminal intercourse, such a conflict of passions overpowered her, that at last, incapable of supporting so violent a state of mind, while she was one day lamenting with her maid the horror of her situation, she fainted away upon her seat. She was supposed to be dead; and if the physician had not fortunately arrived as he did, in twelve hours afterwards she would have been buried.

The husband was already in the room; transported with the most lively joy, he kissed the hands of him who

had restored his beloved wife, and begged him not to lose sight of her for a moment till she was perfectly restored. The excessive love which was evident in all the expressions of her husband affected her so sensibly, that she was not mistress of her senses, and she relapsed into the same state from which she had just been recovered; which however was not so violent, because the remedies were sooner applied.

"Sir," said she to the physician, one day when she was alone with him, my "situation is insupportable. I would "rather die; unless there is some aid "in medicine to extricate me from it, "as you have already done from an- "other which was less terrible to me." She pressed him so earnestly to assist her against the unhappy passion which consumed her, that he at last resolved to do so. The first means which he

adopted was, not to allow her lover to have access to her chamber, though he frequently came to see her. He bled her, and ordered her to bathe; and so reduced her strength, that she became more tranquil. But the most effectual remedy which he employed was, to speak, with her permission, to her lover. He so clearly pointed out to him the necessity of his leaving her, if he really wished to repair the wrongs he had done to his friend, and to preserve the life of her whom he had so greatly injured, that the young man, affected by the calamities which he had occasioned, and repenting of his fault, undertook to travel for several years; and upon his return, entered into a course of life which necessarily kept him away from the house of his friend. The lady is still living, and constitutes the happiness of her husband; whom she

loves and esteems, fulfilling all her duties with the utmost exactness: but she has never been able to free herself from the load of melancholy which oppresses her, and which will probably accompany her to the tomb.

CHAPTER V.

Anecdotes of Louis XV.

It was not long after the death of Louis XV. when I arrived in Paris, and alighted at the house of the Countess de Boufflers. I found that he was but little regretted, though he had received the surname of *well-beloved.* It is true, that the extraordinary attachment which he had conceived for Madame du Barry had very much indisposed the nation towards him. Those who had an interest in governing him, made such ill use of the shameful means which they had employed, that all honest people were indignant, and the King and his whole court fell into the greatest discredit. The manner in which this lady, who afterwards became so famous, made her outset at the court of France is so little known, that I

think I shall gratify my readers by informing them of it.

Louis XV. had a *valet-de-chambre* named Le Bel, who was in great favour with him. He one night gave a supper to M. de Saint Foix, who was the friend of Mademoiselle Lange, which was then the name of Madame du Barry. She was of the party, as well as some other women connected with Saint Foix and Le Bel. The King, who was informed of the party, had the curiosity to be a spectator of it; which he accomplished by means of a private window made in the wall of Le Bel's dining-room, and which looked into his apartment. Mademoiselle Lange appeared so handsome to the King, that he next day asked Le Bel a great number of questions about her. The valet tried many ways of putting the King out of conceit with her; but his Majesty insisted upon seeing her, and was even angry with Le Bel for oppos-

ing his desires. At last Mademoiselle Lange was brought to the King, who was extremely pleased with her. He grew every day more fond of her, and wished to send her to the *Parc aux Cerfs*;* but M. du Barry, who was the most intriguing man in France, and who had for a long time kept Mademoiselle Lange, still directed her conduct. He wished to profit by this inclination of the King; and gave her to understand, that if she went to the *Parc aux Cerfs*, she would be confounded with the crowd of those who were already there, and would be soon forgotten: he therefore persuaded her immediately to marry his brother, who should directly after retire to the country, when she would assume the name of the Countess du Barry. In this new

* The *deer-park* (as it may be translated), a retreat in which Louis XV. gave himself up to every kind of sensual indulgence.

quality she represented to the King, that she could not possibly reside at the *Parc aux Cerfs;* and appeared at Compeigne with a suitable equipage, a handsome livery, and in all the style of a woman of the first rank. The Maréchal de R** then joined with her in this representation, and prevailed upon the King to allow her to be presented at court. His Majesty, however, was reluctant to such a measure: but the Maréchal de R** one day asked him, when he wished that Madame du Barry should come to Versailles; on which he fixed a day.

Madame du Barry being once presented, found no further obstacle to her influence. Those who attempted to oppose her favour were punished with either disgrace or exile; and her brother-in-law, M. du Barry, who directed all her measures, established her so firmly in the brilliant station which she occupied, that in all probability she would have

long maintained it, if Providence had not put an end to the reign of Louis XV. She was still blooming, handsome, full of vivacity and gaiety; and so well understood the art of administering to the King's pleasures, that in her society he appeared to taste a new existence. She had not the least inclination for public affairs, or for that sort of politics which is more properly called the intrigues of court; but feeling that the preservation of her influence depended upon it, she consented to every thing that was desired of her, and agreed to be the chief instrument which her ministerial friends employed for the execution of their designs. One of these, the Duke d'Aiguillon, whether it was that he loved her, or that he thought it was for his interest that she should think so, appeared to be her admirer. He dared to become the rival of his master; and, it is said, was successful.

About that time, a man of the name of Morande, at London, wrote the memoirs of Madame du Barry, and had six thousand copies of them printed: he sent one to the Duke d'Aguillon, and another to the heroine of the memoirs herself, with proposals for selling them the whole edition. Alarmed at the effect which such a publication might produce, they dispatched Beaumarchais to London to prevent it at any price. Beaumarchais negotiated the affair with Morande; who agreed to suppress the whole edition, on condition that he should receive thirty-two thousand livres immediately, and that an annuity of four thousand livres should be secured to him in London, half of which should be settled on his wife after his death. All the copies were afterwards burnt in a brick-kiln, at some distance from London. One only was preserved; the leaves of

which were cut in two, and one half was deposited in the hands of Beaumarchais, and the other in those of Morande, to secure the parties from a new edition of the work, in which case the conditions of the agreement were to be annulled. I received this information from Beaumarchais himself; who assured me that the Life and Memoirs of Madame du Barry which appeared two years afterwards, had no connection whatever with his work.

Another reason why Louis XV. was so little regretted, was the want of sensibility which he evinced for all about him. He gave orders himself for the preparations of the funeral of Madame de Pompadour, of whom he was so fond; and went out to hunt on the very day on which she was buried. The Marquis de Chauvelin, who was one

of the party that supped with him every night, and who was become necessary to him by the pleasures of his society, died of an apoplexy in his presence. The King was a little affected at the event; but it was more on account of the nature of the accident, than from any regret he felt for his loss. Two days after, as he was going to Trianon, his carriage was suddenly stopped by one of the horses dropping down dead. "That is like Chauvelin," said the King.

Another instance of his want of sensibility was particularly remarkable with respect to the Marquis d'Ecquevilly, who belonged to the King's hunt, and spent much of his time with him. Being dangerously ill, the King sent every day to inquire after him. The Marquis, flattered by this attention, and penetrated with gratitude, waited only

till he should be able to pay his respects, to express how sensible he was of so much goodness. He would not even stay for his perfect recovery, before he waited upon the King: but caused himself to be carried into the gallery, and as the King passed on his way to mass, he threw himself at his feet; and in terms of the most lively gratitude was beginning to thank him for the honour he had done him by sending so often to inquire after him, when the King interrupted him: "Ah! "are you there, d'Ecquevilly? I must "tell you honestly, that I thought you "would have died of that complaint; "and I intended to have had you "opened, to see which of your physi-"cians had formed a true opinion of "the nature of your disorder."

Madame la Maréchale de Mirepoix spent every evening with the King and

Madame du Barry. She was the only lady of the Court who shewed this complaisance, but her attention did not prevent her from sometimes receiving very severe *compliments* from Louis XV. A lady of high rank having one day told the King that he was the father of his subjects, the Maréchale, thinking to please the King, extolled the expression, and remarked how flattering it was to be known by such an appellation. "At least," replied the King, "I am not your fa-"ther; for you might very well be my "mother."

Many instances of this nature, with the influence of Madame du Barry, the abuse of authority by those whom she favoured, the dismission of the Duke de Choiseuil and of the parliament, and the bad administration of the finances,—all these things gradually detached the French

from their natural affection for their King. The Abbé Terray, controler-general of the finances, was a man destitute of principles and of feeling. Obliged to provide, not only for the excessive expences of the King, but for those of his favourite, and of her brother-in-law the Count du Barry, he employed all sort of means, even the most unlawful, for raising money. Some deputies from a certain body, one day representing to him the injustice he had done them, said: "Sir, this is "just the same as taking money out of "our pockets."— "Well," replied he sharply, "where would you have me "take it from?" In short a general discontent prevailed, when the King died of the small-pox. He was so far from being regretted, that as the hearse which conveyed his body to the place of interment passed by a great crowd

of people, they saluted him with his favourite hunting-cry, "*Tayau! tayau!*" and when it reached St. Denis, they shouted his cry upon the death of a stag; "*Alalli! alalli!*"

CHAPTER VI.

Peculiarities of the Commencement of the Reign of Louis XVI.

The young King who succeeded Louis XV., ascended the throne under the most favourable auspices. He had always shewn a disposition to act justly; and an expression has even been attributed to him when he was Dauphin, which, taken in its true meaning, seemed to promise the greatest advantages under his reign. As some of the courtiers were mentioning before him the surnames of his predecessors, *Louis the Just, Louis the Great, Louis the Well-beloved*, he said: "As "for me, I wish to be called *Louis the* "*Severe*." But severity in him was only an unshaken firmness in the love of justice, and in every thing which

tended to the welfare of his people: he gave many proofs of this, by reforming the innumerable abuses which had crept in towards the end of his grandfather's reign; and his intentions were well seconded by the vigilant and skilful ministers whom he called about him.

Fortunately for Louis XVI., who had never had the small-pox, all the ministers had remained with his grandfather during his illness; so that the young King could see none of them during the first moments after his death. Madame Adelaide, his aunt, advised him to send at once for M. de Maurepas, who had formerly been minister of state; but who, for twenty years had lived in philosophic retirement, at a distance from the Court: he was a man of sound judgment, and would naturally be desirous of elevating his name by

availing himself of so favourable a circumstance. The parliament was recalled, and an administration was formed of the best and most able among the subjects of the King. M. de Muy was placed in the war-department; and after his death, the Count de Saint Germain, who was then living in an obscure retreat, was called to Court to succeed him. M. de Vergennes had the department of foreign affairs. M. de Malesherbes was taken from his exile to replace the Duke de la Vrillière, who was extremely unpopular; and who was so extremely obdurate, that upon his being taken ill of the stone, Piron said, that "*his heart* "*had fallen into his bladder.*" M. de Sartine, who had conducted the police of Paris so well, was placed at the head of the marine; and shewed that a man of abilities is fit for any thing he undertakes. M. Turgot, whose inte-

grity and talents are known, was entrusted with the finances; but being devoted to the economists and modern philosophers, he was too eager to bring their principles into action, and nearly overturned every thing by wishing to re-establish order. As soon as the King and M. de Maurepas perceived the danger of his administration, he was dismissed in the following manner:

M. de Malesherbes was not long without seeing that he could not do all the good in his place which his judgment and virtue dictated. Having the department of home affairs, and the management of the King's household, he wished to introduce some reform which was odious to the nobility. The general cry which was raised against his plans was made the subject of complaint, and he demanded his dismission; but the King hesitated to grant

it, as it was not agreed who should be put into his place. M. de Maurepas wanted M. Amelot: but M. Turgot opposed that arrangement strongly, because M. Amelot had been his rival; and even since M. Turgot had been controler-general, as M. Amelot was appointed intendant of the finances, he had given him nothing to do, so that he had not business enough to employ a secretary. M. de Maurepas also wished to place M. de Sartine in the department of M. de Malesherbes; but M. de Sartine required, before any thing could be done, that M. Albert, lieutenant of police, and a creature of M. Turgot, who opposed the measure strongly, should be dismissed. All these differences occasioned some warm debates, in which M. Turgot did not behave very well to the King, and even went so far as to write him a letter conceived in very indiscreet terms.

M. de Maurepas at once availed himself of this moment to ruin M. Turgot in the mind of the King. The affair of one of his clerks who had taken money for granting some favour, was revived; and another of a chief clerk who had been accused in a public letter of some malversations, and who having it in his power to bring the author to justice, had neglected to do so. On the next day, an hour after M. de Malesherbes had given in his resignation, M. Bertin went to M. Turgot, to tell him that the King had no further occasion for his services. He returned to Paris the same day; and the philosophical party, who had betrayed so much arrogance, and conceived such high hopes from the favour of these two ministers, saw themselves at once deprived of all support.

I regretted that M. de Malesherbes had left the ministry, as I had under-

taken an important affair which I was then negotiating with him. Having gone to see a sister who lived at Rochelle, the principal protestants of that city, knowing that I was acquainted with this minister, proposed that I should undertake to solicit him in their favour. I acquiesced in their request, but stipulated that I should act in the name of the whole party in France. They wrote to Guienne and to Languedoc to gain suffrages: and I was charged to solicit, in the name of all the Protestants in France, that their condition should be ameliorated; and that they should no longer be disturbed about the validity of their marriages, the legitimacy of their children, and many other privileges, which were not only compatible with, but had even become necessary to, the state at large.

I returned accordingly to Paris, furnished with proper powers; and had some conferences with M. de Malesherbes, to whom I presented several memorials upon the subject. He listened to me with pleasure, and told me that he was very glad that I was entrusted in the affair; that it was consistent with his own wishes, and that he rejoiced at having to treat with me upon it. He even mentioned it to the King in council, where he found the most favourable dispositions. He began by writing a circular letter to some of the Intendants and Bishops of France; and did me the honour to communicate to me a copy of this letter, which was as follows:

" Versailles, May 11, 1776.

" It has been reported to the King, " that the execution of the declaration

" of 1724, is frequently prevented by " the imprudent zeal of some curates " who will only enter the children of " protestants upon their records as na- " tural children. This practice has " been disapproved of by the whole " council, and by the King himself. A " curate is, upon such occasions, only a " witness; it does not belong to him " to dispute the legitimacy of such " children as are offered to him for " baptism: he has nothing to do but " to state the quality under which " they are presented to him. I have " given such directions, on the part of " the King, to the Bishop of Rochelle, " and I think it necessary to acquaint " you thereof."

The day after the date of this letter, M. de Malesherbes gave in his resignation; and as I did not expect to

meet with the same readiness in M. Amelot, whom I did not know, I dropped the affair. It was afterwards taken up, however, by others, on the same principle.

CHAPTER VII.

Continuation of the same Subject.—Affair of M. de Guines.—Beaumarchais.

A SHORT time previous to the retirement of the two ministers of whom I have just spoken, M. de Guines returned from his embassy in England. The cause of his recal has been so variously represented, that I doubt not that my readers will be gratified to learn the particulars, which I received from the best source. A wit very justly called that event a little affair of state, and a great court trick. M. de Vergennes told the Duke d'Orleans, to whom M. de Guines was attached, that the King had some personal dissatisfaction towards him: and, some days after his return, he told M. de Guines

himself—" that he had done wrong : " but that he could say nothing to him " himself, as it was the secret of the " King."—" And yet, Sir," answered M. de Guines, " you always praised " my conduct in your dispatches."— " That was a matter of mere politeness," replied M. de Vergennes. Those ministers who did not like M. de Guines, particularly M. Turgot, took the opportunity of some affair which he had to manage at London, to ruin him in the opinion of the King. M. Turgot was the first to tell his Majesty that M. de Guines ran the risk of embroiling both courts ; and represented him as a man who was by no means proper to remain at London, under the circumstances in which France then was : and he brought M. de Malesherbes so well into his views, that M. de Guines was at last recalled. He then came to Paris : all his friends were invited to sup that

night with Madame de Boufflers, at whose house he arrived an hour after midnight. It was there agreed what line of conduct he should adopt. The next day he went to Versailles; and employed, in that business, all the courage and address possible. He did not leave the Court; but presented himself every day before the King, till he had obtained an audience. He asked permission to justify his conduct; presented copies of his dispatches, and of the answers of the ministry; and was, besides, so well supported by the Queen and assisted by the Duchess de Polignac and the Princess de Chimay, and conducted himself with so much circumspection and prudence, that at last, on the 9th of May, the Queen sent for him, to give him the following letter from the King.

" When I directed that you should " be informed, Sir, that the time which

" I had fixed for your embassy was " finished, I directed that you should " be told, at the same time, that I in- " tended afterwards to grant you such " favours as you might be qualified for. " I do justice to your conduct: I grant " you the honours of the Louvre, and " I give you permission to take the " title of Duke. I do not doubt that " these favours will serve to augment, " if possible, the zeal which I know " you to possess for my service."

Some days after, M. de Guines told me that M. Turgot had accused him of having acted contrary to his instructions, in a criminal manner; but that he had proved the contrary to the King, and had shewn that he had exactly followed the instructions which he received.

As M. Turgot had been the first author of the recall of M. de Guines, and was dismissed two days after the latter was made Duke, we may believe

that the notion which the King entertained, of having been deceived by that minister relative to M. de Guines, and the ill-humour which M. Turgot shewed upon the displacing of M. de Malesherbes, contributed to his disgrace. The Queen made use of one reason, and M. de Maurepas of another, to satisfy their objections to the Controler-General; but whatever may have been their ideas, Louis XVI. shewed, in the course of that affair, a mind open to reason and justice, and appeared to be wholly impartial in his decision.

This Prince evinced, both in his words and in his actions, an upright mind, an excellent heart, and a great love of virtue. His most trifling sayings indicated what he was. Madame de Boufflers related one of this nature to me. He one day said that he had no judgment in pictures. "That is a "great pity," said that lady to him;

" your Majesty has such fine ones."—
" Well," replied the King, " they are
" not lost on that account." He was very desirous of continuing to live sociably with his brothers, of whom he was very fond: but I do not know from what cause that desire was not gratified: I only know, that it was not for want of indulgence and tenderness on his part. I recollect an answer of M. de Maurepas, on this subject, which at the time pleased me much. The King, in the early part of his reign, had a little altercation with the Count d'Artois; when the latter said several times to him: " What can you
" do to me?"—" Ask M. de Maure-
" pas," said the King.—" Well, Sir," said the Count d'Artois, addressing himself to M. de Maurepas, " what
" can he do to me?"—" Forgive you," replied the minister.

Notwithstanding the desire which

was entertained of reforming the abuses that had been introduced in the government by the indolence of the late King and the criminal conduct of some of his ministers, not only great caution was taken to spare the memory of the former, but great clemency was also shewn towards the latter. Madame du Barry, it is true, was shut up in a convent: but that was a measure of precaution, to secure the secrets of the state, and to oblige her to settle her affairs and pay her debts; besides, she was not kept there more than a year. As some persons injudiciously blamed that measure, which they thought too severe, Madame de Boufflers very properly observed, that they were greatly in the wrong: "For," said she, "since most women of the town "are confined for their bad behaviour, "why should people complain that this "one is treated so, who certainly has "behaved worse than any of the rest?"

The respect of Louis XVI. for the memory of the late King went so far as to search for his private letters, and to obtain such as were in the hands of those with whom he corresponded. The celebrated Chevalier d'Eon, among others, had several which the King was desirous of suppressing. While the French government was fulminating against him, and exerting their utmost efforts to bring him back to France, either by promises or threats, Louis XV. maintained a correspondence with him, gave him a pension of twelve thousand livres (£500), and wrote to him: "Take care not to come to Paris: "they wish to ruin you." At the accession of Louis XVI. to the throne, M. de Vergennes represented to the King, that he ought not to allow the letters of his grandfather to remain in the hands of the Chevalier d'Eon; and M. de Beaumarchais was chosen to go to London to obtain them. He accord-

ingly entered into a negociation with the Chevalier, who consented to give up the letters, provided they would grant him leave to return to France, and continue to him the pension: but Madame de Guerchi, who attributed the death of her husband to the chagrin which he had experienced from the ridicule which the Chevalier d'Eon had brought upon him, went to M. de Maurepas, to inform him, that if the Chevalier dared to return to France, her son would wait for him at Calais to break his head: and that, if he perished in the enterprise, she had a son-in-law who would attempt it. D'Eon having been apprised of this, only laughed and said: "Well, I wish to "put an end to all that: I declare that "I am a woman!" Beaumarchais has since told me, that he was really convinced of the truth of the sex of this extraordinary woman, which was ascertained in England by proceedings

which are too long to be detailed. Beaumarchais returned to Paris, acquainted the King and M. de Vergennes with what he had done, and was immediately sent back. He obtained the letters of Louis XV. for five thousand guineas, which he gave as a reimbursement for a contract of twelve thousand livres, and a safe-conduct, in which mention was made of the political and military services rendered by the Chevalier d'Eon, and she received permission to wear the cross of Saint Louis. She also had her choice to live either in France or in any foreign country, except Great-Britain. Having obtained thus much, the Chevalier d'Eon made other pretensions. She demanded four thousand guineas more to pay her debts. That sum was granted her; but Beaumarchais placed it in the hands of Lord Ferrars, who died some time after. The Chevalier at last returned to France,

and was obliged to resume the habits of her sex. She afterwards came to England to recover her four thousand guineas from the hands of Lord Ferrars's family, but in the year 1803 the matter was still unsettled.

I knew Beaumarchais extremely well: he was the son of a watchmaker at Paris; but his wit, talents, and figure, gave him a very advantageous reception in society. He composed very pretty songs, set them to music himself, sung them and accompanied them on the harp, and seemed to excel in each of these talents. With these he combined a great deal of gaiety, presence of mind, vivacity, and assurance: nothing more was necessary to make him sought for in many circles. The Prince de Conti, who was amused by him, afforded him his protection in an affair he had in the parliament Maupeou, as the parliament was called

which was formed by the Chancellor when the former was dismissed. The memorials which he wrote on that subject exposed some of the members of that parliament to ridicule; and contributed not a little to degrade them in the opinion of the nation at large, and to bring about the recal of the other. These memorials sparkle with wit and gaiety, and contain some passages remarkable for their eloquence. Beaumarchais had the good-sense not to blush at his birth, and was the first to mention the excellent watches which his father had made. Once, when he was closeted more than an hour with one of the ministers, while some persons of distinction were waiting, one of them, indignant that Beaumarchais was the cause of his being detained so long, resolved to mortify him. He stopped him as he was going out, and said aloud: "M. de Beaumarchais

" have the goodness to tell me what " is the matter with my watch: it " very often stops; and I am sure " you will find the cause of it."— " Certainly, Sir," answered Beaumarchais, " for I served my appren- " ticeship under my father." As he said that, he took the watch; and pretending to be awkward in handling it, let it fall upon the floor: and went away, making a thousand apologies for his inadvertence to the nobleman, who thus raised a laugh against himself. When he returned from London, he said that he had observed a small difference between Paris and London, which, however, produced great effects; it was, that there they had the liberty of the press, while, at Paris, liberty was oppressed.

CHAPTER VIII.

Philosophers of the Age.

In my review of the most remarkable classes of society in Paris, I did not forget the philosophers. I wished to know them intimately, and my character as an author required that I should court their support; for though their suffrage did not positively establish the reputation of literary men, it contributed much to promote or retard it, accordingly as they were well or ill received by these. I had already known M. d'Alembert several years before my residence at Paris: the celebrated De la Grange had introduced me to him, and I never came to Paris without seeing him. He invited me to the circle which was held at the house of his friend, Mademoiselle de l'Espinasse,

which was the rendezvous of all the philosophical sect, of the wits who were supported by it, and of all those who expected any thing by attaching themselves to it. The graces and intellectual charms of Mademoiselle de l'Espinasse, a natural and easy air, the manners of the great world, which she had acquired with Madame du Deffant, and the assiduity of M. d'Alembert, soon made her circle celebrated. A singular conformity of birth, taste, and disposition, seemed to cement the union of these two persons. M. d'Alembert was the natural son of Madame de Tensin (sister of the cardinal of that name) and of M. Destouches. He was exposed as soon as he was born; and was received by the wife of a glazier, who took care of him as if he had been her own son. M. Destouches, however, who had not lost sight of him, provided for his edu-

cation, and secretly supplied the necessary means for his support. When he became celebrated for his talents and science, he was introduced into the world by the Marchioness du Deffant. Madame de Tencin, who adored men of genius, wished to acknowledge him; but he refused her desire, saying that he owned no other mother than her who had taken care of his infancy. In fact, he always respected the poor glazier's wife as his mother, and continued to pay the greatest attention to her till she died. He became acquainted with Mademoiselle de l'Espinasse at the Marchioness du Deffant's, who had taken her from the country as a companion. She was a natural daughter of the Marquis du Deffant; and possessed such an agreeable disposition, that she contributed much to the pleasure of that lady's society: but having differed with her,

M. d'Alembert espoused her quarrel; and both having taken apartments in the same house, they established an assembly of wits, which drew away a great part of those who frequented Madame du Deffant's.

This was properly the temple in which false philosophy pronounced its oracles: M. d'Alembert was the high-priest, Mademoiselle the priestess; the Baron de Holback, Diderot, Helvetius, and several others, were the inferior agents. There were some other houses in Paris, such as those of Madame Geoffrin, Madame Necker, &c. where the wits of every sect and every rank assembled: but these societies were subordinate to that just mentioned, and were regulated by its decisions. The Condorcets, Marmontels, and La Harpes, and an infinite number of subaltern wits, derived their existence and their reputation

from this. Thither they went to draw their opinions and their belief, in order to diffuse them throughout those little spheres, of which they were themselves the suns. It was there that the productions of the times were examined, that patents of immortality were distributed to the genius who shewed submission to their judgments, and where the ruin of the untractable was decreed, conformably with the maxim religiously observed among them,

Et nul n'aura d'esprit, hors nous et nos amis.

Voltaire himself flattered them, and was well paid for his praise by the homage which they rendered to him: he became the divinity to whom they burnt incense in the temple. Never, in any age or in any country, did any mania spread itself so quickly and so generally as the philosophical mania; and, to the disgrace of the throne,

some great Princes cringed to these fanatics, and seemed to court their approbation. To merit this, it was not necessary to possess talents; it was sufficient to laugh at religion and government, and to have no regard for rank, birth, or authority. Those who were able to persecute, and did so, were placed among the number of the chosen. Madame du Deffant, who did not like them, characterised them by the following lines:

On appelle aujourd'hui l'excessive licence
liberté;

On prétend établir à force d'insolence
l'égalité;

Sans concourir au bien, prôner la bienfaisance
se nomme *humanité*.

M. d'Alembert, who was short and weak, was one day confounded by the repartee of a lady of great wit. He was warmly defending a state of nature, in

order to establish his favourite system of equality. "M. d'Alembert," said the lady to him, "I would advise you not "to be so eager for a state of nature; "you would run a risk of holding but a "very low rank in it."

The address and industry which these pretended philosophers employed in making proselytes, rendered them for some time the masters of opinion. They availed themselves of this dominion to circulate certain works, in which their principles were laid down with more or less boldness, according to the persons for whom they were intended. They at last went so far as to publish an Encyclopedia; which, among a number of useful things, contained an innumerable quantity of errors and gross blunders. At the same time, another sect, which was a subdivision of the Encyclopedists, sprung up; that was the economists. The

Duke de Choiseul called them *The Capucins of the Encyclopedia.* A crowd of inferior writers appeared upon the scene, sure of being well received if they baited their work with some common-place stuff against the most sacred and most important concerns of mankind.

The republic of letters was inundated by these false coiners, who substituted copper for gold. Voltaire was placed above Racine and Corneille; La Harpe thought he might take the place of Boileau; Marmontel, with Belisarius in his hand, presumed to occupy that of the author of Telemachus; and Thomas imagined that of Bossuet to be due to him. By degrees, the Academy of Sciences and the French Academy were infected with these vermin. By dint of intrigue, M. d'Alembert, Mademoiselle de l'Espinasse, and their friends, succeeded in filling

these two societies with their creatures; and I have myself been a witness of the manner in which candidates were admitted there, by them in their sanctuaries.

CHAPTER IX.

Characters of some of the self-styled Philosophers.

My connection with the Countess de Boufflers, the Prince de Conti, and several other persons of the highest rank and greatest authority, had weight perhaps with the philosophical sect, who for some time treated me very well. They did indeed owe me a little enmity, because in my work *On the Origin of the Discoveries attributed to the Moderns*, I had shewn my respect for religion: but as I was rather moderate in conversation, and as I took care not to contradict their opinions too openly, they did not molest me, till I had re-published the *Tocsin*, under the new title of *An Appeal to Good*

Sense. They then lost all patience, and one of them undertook to vilify both me and my work.

My critic was a man of quality *, and was besides a geometrician. He once took it into his head to muffle himself up in the doctoral cap, in order to give currency to a wretched satire against every writer who had been praised by an author whom he disliked; which he called *A Letter from a Theologian.* The Doctor, forgetting that he was a geometrician, thought himself exempt from the obligation of proving any thing; and contented himself with saying, that my work was an attack upon the moderns, and that it contained very little philosophy. But as he was not one of that class of theologians, whose assertions are received without

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* The Marquis de Condorcet.

proof, he was not even listened to; and as his letter was thought very dull, notwithstanding the strokes of rage which he had thrown into it in order to render it severe, he had the disgrace of having shewn through the cassock some indications of a character of which he seemed rather ashamed, and which he was very sorry not to have more effectually disguised.

This man of quality, geometrician, and theologian, found himself all at once a chemist. He at least thought himself qualified to decide upon the merits of some chemists, in the eulogies which he published of several academicians. But those who understood the subject, declared, that he had made as many blunders as he had written words. He also spoke of anatomists, as a man who knew no more of anatomy than he did of chemistry or philosophy. He said, in the same eu-

logies, that literary men were very proper to have the government of states; because he thought himself a man of letters, and had a great desire to govern: but, added he, "the evil is, that "the literati are not fitted for in-"trigues." However, to remedy that inconvenience in himself, he formed a little intrigue against the revenues of the Academy of Sciences, by which he proposed nothing less than to appropriate the half of them to himself. The fact was as follows:

The Academy of Sciences had asked the King to restore twelve thousand livres (£500.) a year, which the Abbé Terray had taken away from them. M. d'Alembert and the Marquis de C. had signed the resolution wh ch had been adopted for appropriating these funds to the encouragement of the arts and sciences. Notwithstanding this, M. Turgot, when he granted the request,

disposed of five thousand livres (£208.) a year in favour of the Marquis, to the great astonishment of the Academy; which complained that a sum originally destined to the use of the company for the public benefit, should be thus employed, and without any authority, to favour an individual. It happened that about this time, M. d'Alembert having borrowed the registers of the academy from M. de Fouchy, perpetual secretary to the Academy of Sciences, the latter, after having frequently asked for them in vain, sent for them one morning in a very peremptory manner. In sending them back in such haste, M. d'Alembert unwarily left among them the sketch of a memorial to the controler-general, begging him to appropriate five thousand of the twelve thousand livres which were to be restored to the Academy, to the use of the M. de C., joint

secretary of the Academy; and "to "give only one thousand to *that poor* "*creature* de Fouchy, who should be "dismissed, as a man no longer capable "of performing the duties of his of-"fice." M. de Fouchy, who found the paper, surprised at seeing himself treated as a weak man, and indignant at the plot which had been secretly forming against him, denounced M. d'Alembert to the Academy, as guilty of having converted the funds destined for the use of the company, to the advantage of his creature and friend the M. de C. As for the incapacity of which he had been accused, he demanded that a committee should be appointed to judge of the extract he made from the memorial of the Academy, and that his continuance in office should depend upon the issue. M. d'Alembert and the Marquis saw that it would be prudent to stifle the affair:

and in spite of the just clamours which had been raised against them, some honorary academicians, and among others M. de Trudaine, being concerned in it, the rising storm was appeased; and nothing remained but the impression which was made upon the mind, that, notwithstanding what my critic has said, men of letters are as well adapted for intrigues as men of the world.

At last, after having been geometrician, theologian, chemist, anatomist, &c. the good C. suddenly changed the scene, and became economist; or rather he thought that it was sufficient to pour forth a torrent of abuse against M. Necker, who had dared to be of an opinion contrary to that of his friends, to gain the reputation of an economist: but all he got by that was the surname of *mad sheep*, which exactly described the contrast between his counenance and his character. Such was

the vilifier of my work; whom I shall now leave, to finish the characters of his philosophical friends.

I have already said, that the end of the philosophy of the times was, to free the mind from the shackles of religion; and, as Madame du Deffant has said, to establish equality by the aid of insolence, and to substitute licentiousness for liberty. This was to be effected under the fine name of humanity; but woe to him who was refractory to the principles of the sect! A little junto passed sentence upon him summarily; he was denounced by all the satellites; Voltaire covered him with ridicule; he was hooted, mocked, persecuted, and ruined. M. le Franc de Pompignan, (a man of fashion and a respectable magistrate,) as well as many others whom it would be useless to name, were instances of this. These ideas and these principles became so much in vogue, that no

book could be published without being loaded with them. Every work which was read at the Academy with a varnish of philosophy, was sure of acquiring a fame, noisy at least though short, and was praised in all companies. Histories which were interspersed with philosophical reflections against the *prejudices* of religion and government, were recommended to youth; didactic works, tragedies, comedies, fugitive pieces, all bore the stamp of the new philosophy: it was of little consequence that the existing system of morality was overthrown; indeed that was the constant end to which all these productions were directed. The facts of history, the manners of the times, the customs of nations, were disguised, to make them subservient to the principal design, and to illustrate some fine philosophical maxim.

When I was at Paris, a laughable

scene occurred, which is not inapplicable to this subject. M. de la Harpe had composed a tragedy upon the misfortunes of the family of Monzikow, filled with those philosophical notions of which I have been speaking. Every one acquainted with history, knows, that Menzikow was very conspicuous in Russia at the commencement of the present century. The author read his piece before several companies in Paris, at which some Russian noblemen happened by chance to be present. I one day asked the Count Schouvalow what he thought of M. de la Harpe. "It "is enough to make one die with "laughing," said he. Upon my expressing my surprise that a tragedy, which was favourably spoken of, should have such an effect: "How can "it be otherwise," replied the Count, "when we see an author emphatically "holding forth to us, as received

" maxims among us, things which are
" directly opposite to our customs and
" our manners; and citing, as funda-
" mental laws of the Russian empire,
" principles which are directly oppo-
" site to those which have ever been
" established there? Besides, even the
" history of the subject is entirely al-
" tered in the tragedy: the most noto-
" rious facts are disguised; the persons
" in it are so unlike themselves, that
" we, who have seen them, do not
" at all know them. A prince (Alex-
" ander Menzikow) is made to die in
" Siberia, at the age of fifteen, whom
" I saw alive at the age of seventy, in
" Petersburg. As to the young Prin-
" cess Menzikow, who, in the tra-
" gedy, dies at five years old, and to
" whom a tomb of marble, which her
" parents bathe with their tears, is
" erected in Siberia, she was at Paris
" only two years ago, enjoying perfect

" health; and was very near being
" at the reading of this tragedy, in
" which she would have been very
" much surprised to hear her funeral
" oration composed by M. de la
" Harpe."

CHAPTER X.

Philosophical Mania.—Laughable Account of Poinsinet.

THOUGH my aversion for the philosophical party was sufficiently well known, and though I freely condemned their absurdities and their intolerance, they never declared open war against me. I lived in a state of intimacy with some of them, whose disposition and character I liked, except when their principles were concerned; for if once that chord was touched, the most gentle in appearance became the most furious. I even rendered some services to individuals among them, when occasion offered. M. d'Alembert having recommended M. Diderot to me, as wishing to obtain a pension of a thousand livres (for keeping a secretary)

during his life, and to have it continued to his wife after his decease; I undertook to procure it for him, and prevailed upon the Prince de Conti to grant it. Diderot came to thank me, and begged me to present him to his benevolent benefactor. I accordingly did so. We found the prince in bed: and after having acknowledged his gratitude, my philosopher was so much at his ease, that he presently seated himself upon the bed, and a moment after, being of a different opinion from the prince upon some point, he told him that he was obstinate; and afterwards related how he had been received at Petersburgh whence he had just returned, and that the Empress of Russia devoted two hours every day to converse with him. He remembered all that he had said to the Empress, and all that she had said in answer. He spoke with the greatest volubility, and with

an enthusiasm which lost its effect in proportion as he grew warm. I recollect but one thing of all he said which pleased me sufficiently to have a place in my memory.

The Empress wished him to have a comedy, which he had composed, and which he had read to her, acted at Petersburgh. He excused himself, and begged that Her Majesty would not have it performed till his departure. "Why so?" said the Empress: "are "you afraid of losing your reputation? "I have had four of my dramatic "pieces represented, and have seen "them hissed without being at all "mortified by it."—"The case is very "different;" replied the author: "if "Diderot, the author, should fail, he "fails altogether; but when your Ma- "jesty fails as an author, the Empress "of all the Russias remains still in all "her glory."

To the rage of passing for a philosopher, which prevailed in the capital, was also added that of passing for a wit, or freethinker, (for it was all one); and this mania had insensibly infected all ranks of people. The attorney's clerk and the shop-boy wanted neither memory nor inclination to fill their heads with such verses of Voltaire as the following, in Œdipus:

Les prêtres ne sont point ce qu'un vain peuple pense:
Notre crédulité fait toute leur science;

as well as a hundred other passages of the same kind, which put every body at their ease. The Chevalier de la Luzerne, one day, related a very pleasant affair of this sort, which is admirably calculated to give the reader an idea of the turn of mind among the French,

and of the influence of fashion even among their mechanics.

The Chevalier was commissioned by a lady, who was in the country, to procure of the famous shoemaker, Charpentier, some pairs of shoes of a pattern which she sent him. He went himself to the shoemaker's, and was directed to his dwelling; which was a fine house, and where there were two servants in livery at the door. He asked for Charpentier the shoemaker: he was answered, "This is the "place;" and one of the footmen hurried on to shew him the way, though the Chevalier begged him not to give himself the trouble. Seeing that they were conducting him into a handsome apartment, he thought he had made some mistake, and repeated that he wanted Charpentier the shoemaker. "This is my master's room," said the footman: "I must trouble you to step

" this way; I am going to let him " know you are here." The Chevalier was ushered through a fine antichamber, a drawing room richly furnished, a bedchamber, and thence was introduced into an elegant cabinet, where, while he was waiting for M. Charpentier, he could not help observing a *commode* of the richest and most elegant workmanship, the compartments of which were decorated with portraits of the first ladies of the Court; the Princess de Guimené, Madame de Clermont, &c.; and while he was examining with astonishment all he saw, M. Charpentier entered in a coxcombical undress. " Ah! Monsieur Charpentier," said the Chevalier, pointing to the commode, " I am admiring every thing I see " here."—" Sir, you are very good to " bestow any attention upon such tri- " fles."—" Ah!" said the Chevalier, " what taste, what elegance!"—" Sir,

" you see that this is the retreat of a " man who loves enjoyment; I live " here like a philosopher."—" But, M. " Charpentier, from what I see, you have " been well treated by the ladies."— " Faith! Sir, it is true that some of these " ladies have a kindness for me; they " gave me their portraits. You see that " I am not ungrateful, and have not " disposed of them inelegantly. But " M. le Chevalier, may I ask what " procures me the honour of your ac- " quaintance?"—" Sir, here is a pat- " tern for some shoes for a lady, one of " my friends."—" Ah! I know who " that is: I know that beautiful foot; " I would walk twenty leagues to see " it. Do you know, that, next to the " little Guimené, your friend has the " handsomest foot in the world? Well, " Sir, I will attend to her orders." The Chevalier was retiring, when M. Charpentier said, " Chevalier, if you

" are not engaged, will you, without
" ceremony, stay and take soup with
" me. My wife, who is pretty, will
" be with us; and I expect some other
" women of our acquaintance, who
" are extremely amiable. After din-
" ner we play Œdipus, and you will
" have no reason to repent having staid
" with us."—" I have no doubt of
" that, M. Charpentier; but I am
" unfortunately engaged to-day: it
" must be some other time."

This story appeared to me uncommonly ridiculous; and I should have had some hesitation in believing it, if the Chevalier de la Luzerne had not assured me that it happened to himself. Some years after, being at Paris with an English lady, we sent for Charpentier, who confirmed me in the idea which had been given me of him. He affected to be a wit, and recited before us some philosophical strokes, taken

from the tragedies of Voltaire. He told me that *he was a philosopher;* and gave me sufficient proof that the fashionable mania had infected him, and had almost turned his head.

I had known the Count d'Albaret at Turin: he was a Piedmontese gentleman of great wit and gaiety. I met him at Paris, at the house of the Count de Viry, Ambassador from the King of Sardinia: he now seemed to have grown more serious, and I asked the reason of it. He told me that he had retired from the world, and now lived like a philosopher. He invited me to come and see him, near Montmartre, where he had a very good house. I went thither, and he introduced me to a pretty girl whom he kept there. He gave concerts; read Voltaire, Marmontel, Rousseau, and the System of Nature; kept a mistress, and still said, "I live like "a philosopher!" for as soon as a man

had succeeded in placing himself above his rank in life, or rather ceased to have any regard for decency and the laws, he fancied himself a genius and a philosopher.

The Count d'Albaret was one of the most amusing men I knew, before he was infected with philosophy. His inexhaustible gaiety, and an original turn of mind, furnished him with the most charming sallies of wit. He had been the greatest jeerer in the world; but he had renounced that sport: besides, he told me that it was no longer in fashion; that people no longer jeered, but amused themselves in *mystifying*. As this term was not in the dictionaries, I begged him to explain it to me. "To jeer is, as "every body knows," said he "to "make a person a subject of laughter "by addressing him openly and inge- "nuously; to *mystify* is to make a man

"believe absurd things, and to render "him a dupe to his credulity." He enabled me to understand this matter much better by a trick which had been played upon a poor poet, who furnished a very proper object for that sort of amusement.

Préville the comedian, and some others (among whom was, I believe, the Count d'Albaret) frequently diverted themselves with the simplicity of Poinsinet, the poet; who, in other respects, was not deficient in talents. One day Préville came to him in great haste, to acquaint him that the office of the King's *screen* was just vacant; and added, that he would do well to solicit for it. Poinsinet asked what it was: the other told him, that the King did not use common screens, like private individuals; but that he always employed a man of wit, to place himself between the King and the fire,

in whatever part of the room his Majesty might be, in order to save him the trouble of removing the screen; and that, besides, when the King was low-spirited, or was fatigued by his application to business, he diverted himself by conversing with his screen; who, by that means, frequently had an opportunity of speaking a good word for his friends, or in favour of any other person whom he wished to serve, which made the office both important and lucrative. Poinsinet, delighted, asked what he had to do. Nothing, said the other, but try if you are able to fulfil the functions of a screen. A day being fixed, a dinner was ordered at a tavern: six of their common friends met there; a great fire was made; and, during dinner, they kept poor Poinsinet standing before the fire-place, encouraging him to support the extreme heat of the fire, which they unmercifully kept stirring

all the time, by representing to him the advantages of the office, each begging of him to procure him some favour. They continued this cruel sport till the little man, who was half roasted, declared with great regret, that he despaired of ever being able properly to fulfil the functions of King's screen.

CHAPTER XI.

The Abbé Barthelemy. — Duke and Duchess de Choiseul.

I saw, on the other hand, amiable and respectable men of letters, who to the greatest erudition, added all the agreeableness and politeness which good company, good manners, and good sense, could give. The Abbé Barthelemy was one of this number, and I formed the strictest friendship with him. He was learned in the Oriental languages, in which he had even made very considerable discoveries; and he was extremely well versed in Greek and Latin. Having always lived in the great world, he had acquired an easy air and courteous manners. He joined to the merit of a man of letters, and to the agreeable exterior

of a man of the world, a solid judgment, great integrity, and a mild disposition, which rendered him one of the most amiable and most estimable men I ever knew. Being a writer profoundly versed in the knowledge of antiquity, and at the same time elegant and polished in his style, he knew how to present the most abstruse matter under the most agreeable and most interesting point of view. Several dissertations, inserted in the Memoirs of the Academy of Inscriptions and of the Belles-Lettres, attest the truth of this: but the best of his works, and which has not yet seen the light *, is, *The Travels of Anacharsis;* in which he explains, with the most consummate erudition, and with all the graces of which the French language is susceptible, the

* This work has been published since, with the greatest success.

laws, manners, customs, politics, and history, of the best times of Greece.

About this period Doctor Askew, a learned Englishman, and a member of the Academy of Inscriptions and Belles-Lettres, having died, some members of the Academy proposed me to succeed him, as an Englishman. Though born in France, I had gone, when very young, over to England; I had been minister of the King of Great Britain in foreign countries; and finding me thus attached to that country by several ties, I was regarded as an Englishman. I was proposed and received as such in the Academy of Belles-Lettres; and this drew still closer the ties of friendship which united the Abbé Barthelemy and myself. He commonly passed the summer with the Duke and Duchess de Choiseul, at Chanteloup: he strongly wished that I might go thither also; and in the hope that his il-

lustrious friends would invite me, he did me the honour to present me to the Duchess de Choiseul. The great desire which I had to behold more nearly a lady whose merit and virtue were justly celebrated throughout all Europe, made me take the greatest pains to please her. Either from kindness towards me, or from complaisance to the Abbé Barthelemy, whose great friendship for me she knew, she invited me to pass some time at Chanteloup; and I promised to go, fully resolved to keep my word. Having taken leave therefore of Madame de Boufflers for some time, I went to Chanteloup, where I met with the most obliging reception; and was introduced to the Duke de Choiseul, whose reputation, and the important part he had sustained in the affairs of Europe, fully justified the desire I had to know him. Being versed in the politics of Europe, and

acquainted with all that had taken place during his ministry, I found no great difficulty in engaging his attention. I designedly turned the conversation to some particular affairs which immediately concerned him, with which he was surprised to see me so well informed. I insinuated myself by degrees into his confidence; and when I had only a few days more to stay at Chanteloup, he invited me to return. This I did: and I passed, at different times, the greatest part of the summer at that charming place; where I enjoyed all the pleasures which friendship, and the admiration of great talents, can produce.

Chanteloup is a magnificent castle, situated upon the banks of the Loire. The Duke de Choiseul had found much room for improvement there, and was very successfully employed in embellishing his retreat. He had made a

magnificent landing-place, gardens, artificial meadows; and introduced a piece of water of half a mile, from which were seen seven walks, which led into the forest of Amboise behind the garden. The noble owner of the estate was the first to give me the fine example of the happy consequence of the attention of a great nobleman to his possessions. Every thing around him wore a new face. Chanteloup was a delightful place, where the most complete and the most magnificent establishment was kept up, that I have seen at the house of any great nobleman in Europe.

The Duke de Choiseul was above the middle stature, and extremely well made: he had a noble, lively, open, and pleasing air, and an intelligent countenance: all his features bespoke the fine and amiable qualities of his soul: in short, he was generous and

magnificent, possessed great elevation of sentiment, the noble frankness of a true gentleman, infinite wit, great vivacity, and a gaiety so natural and so agreeable, that it would have overcome the phlegm of the gravest Spaniard. To all these he joined a simplicity of manners, and so mild an ease in the intercourse of life, that it is by no means astonishing that the Duke de Choiseul had so many friends and so few enemies: and even after he had lost his favour at Court, he had the glory of seeing several of the latter who did not dare to declare themselves as such, but were desirous of the honour of being thought his friends by visiting him in his retreat.

When he solicited Madame de Choiseul in marriage, her property, which was very considerable, was withheld, in consequence of her right being disputed by her relations. M. de Choiseul

would not wait for the decision of the suit in order to marry her, and the day after their wedding the cause was decided against them; so that M. de Choiseul, who was not rich, found himself united to a lady who had nothing. He did not, however, lose his gaiety: but told his mother-in-law, who was distressed about it, not to make herself uneasy; that he would not give up his pretensions till he had been on an embassy, and had acquired an estate of two hundred thousand livres (8000l.) a year. He has gone further: he was so well qualified to ensure success, that the Marquis de Carraccioli told me, that being at Paris, in a company where they were surprised that M. de Choiseul, (who was then but little known), had been appointed ambassador to Rome, one of them said: "Gentlemen, you "are astonished to see M. de Stain-"ville (that was then his name) going

" ambassador to Rome; but I, for my " part, should not be at all surprised to " see him one day prime minister."

The Duke de Choiseul, however, and the Duke de Gontaut, who had married a sister of Madame de Choiseul, appealed from the award which had been given, and obtained a revision of the proceedings. The Duke de Gontaut was then deeply in love with Madame Rossignol, the wife of the intendant of Lyons, and was for ever talking of her to M. de Choiseul, and continually saying, " Brother, do " you think that Madame Rossignol " loves me?" On the day when their cause was tried they were together, where they heard the sentence pronounced against them, which gave the property to their opponents, and ruined them. After the sentence was read, the Duke de Choiseul said, in a low voice, to the Duke de Gontaut, " Bro-

" ther, do you think that Madame Ros-
" signol loves you?" This produced a burst of laughter from them both, which astonished the whole court not a little, and shewed that the gaiety of M. de Choiseul never abandoned him. A decree of the *grand-chamber*, or of the *grand-council*, however, restored to M. de Choiseul the fortune of his wife.

When he was in the ministry, the elevation of his mind shone forth in every part of his government: particularly in opposing the dangerous plots of the Chancellor Maupeon; and in supporting the parliaments, which that magistrate wished to destroy. He also shewed the nobleness of his sentiments and his firmness, in refusing to support his influence by the favour of Madame du Barry; whom he had known in a situation too contemptible to justify the court which

was paid to her, by those who tried to raise themselves by means so unworthy of a great mind. These two persons, who dreaded the talents and courage of the Duke de Choiseul, united to ruin him. He received an order from the King to retire to Chanteloup; but that was a triumph for him. He was not only generally regretted, but all the principal nobility of France made it a point to go and see him. They asked permission of the King for that purpose, through the Count de Saint Florentin, who answered, "The "King neither permits nor forbids "it:" and they went. The King was surprised to learn that the drawing-room of Chanteloup was frequently more brilliant than that of Versailles, and that even the captains of his guards asked leave to go thither. M. de Chauvelin asked directly of the King, his majesty's permission to go and see M. de Choiseul. The King said: "He was not

" your friend." " It is for that reason, " Sire," said the Marquis; and he went. During the four years that the exile of this minister lasted, there was scarcely a day on which some person from the Court did not either arrive at or leave Chanteloup. The secrets of the Cabinet were as well known there, as at Versailles itself; and the errors of the new ministry were so strictly examined there, that the company of Chanteloup was dreaded as a tribunal. Even the King became curious to know its decisions; and he frequently asked those who returned thence, " What " do they say at Chanteloup?"

The command which M. de Choiseul had over himself, was not the least of his great qualities. The day on which he came to Chanteloup, he was as cheerful, and more happy than he had ever been. The day after his arrival he sent for his steward, and fixed with him the hours

which he intended to devote to the management of his estates. He employed himself in the embellishment of his retreat; and managed a farm of twelve hundred acres himself, for his amusement: and by the manner in which he conducted himself, he shewed that a man of true genius is fit for every thing.

The Duchess de Choiseul, who was fond of the country, made her only study, the happiness of a husband who had always been the object of her love and admiration. Reason, mildness, talents, modesty, a scrupulous attention to say and do nothing which might give pain, and to anticipate, on the contrary, the desires of all those who were about her; extensive charity, and a patience which was proof against all misfortunes; were the principal features of the character of this amiable and respected lady: sprightly

and modest cheerfulness, a cultivated mind, the practice of paying attention to those who spoke, and of pointing out the merit of others in conversation, were its ornaments.

The society of Chanteloup was diversified by a choice of the best company in France. There was less the year that I was there, because the Duke de Choiseul had been recalled under the new reign; and those who had before made a point of going to keep him company, no longer saw the same reason for doing it when he remained upon his estate from choice: however, he always had a small number of friends who added to the pleasures which the owners of this charming retreat diffused round them. Among those whom I met there, the most remarkable ladies were the Duchess de Grammont, the Countess de Brionne, and the Princesses de Carignan and

de Lorraine her daughters. I must defer till another time, the pleasure I should have in speaking of these. I also knew there the Marshal de Mouchy, who had recently been created Marshal of France, and who had scarcely then recovered his senses from the intoxication of joy which this promotion produced. He was one of the best men in the world; brave and honest, a good father, a good husband, and a good friend: but his vanity threw a shade of ridicule upon his character, which, upon a better acquaintance, would be seen with regret. I cannot help laughing, even now, at an expression which I once heard made respecting him by the provost of the Marshalsea of the province of Tourraine. He had come to receive his orders for escorting him the next day on his departure from Chanteloup: the Marshal several times repeated to him very

emphatically: " Sir, I insist on not " receiving the honours due to my " rank: remember, I do not want any " honours." Upon this the provost, turning towards me, said in a whisper: " He says he wants no honours: he " devours them like a shark."

CHAPTER XII.

The Manner of living at Chanteloup.—Adventure of M. Bertin, and other remarkable Events.

I HAVE said, the establishment at Chanteloup was more magnificent than any other great nobleman's I have seen in Europe: the reader shall judge. There were nearly four hundred persons who lived in the house, including servants, in the pay of the Duke; fifty-four of whom were in livery: and though the greater part of them were not kept by him, the expense of the family may be guessed at, from the single article of bread, which cost three hundred livres (£12. 10s.) a day. Besides the Duke's table, a knight of Saint Louis, esquire to the Duchess, kept a second table, served like her

own, for the reception of persons of a certain rank, who were there upon business. There were, besides, three other tables; without reckoning the livery servants, who had board-wages. There were also a hunting establishment, a theatre, &c.

The manner of living there was quite easy. Nobody made their appearance in the morning, except on particular occasions. At three o'clock dinner was served; when those who chose attended at table, and those who did not had it served in their apartments. After dinner the company went to the drawing-room, where they made a party; or in very hot weather, occupied their time in reading: every one remained or withdrew, according to his pleasure; nobody ever said, Why do you not stay? Where are you going? nor asked any other troublesome questions.

The Duke had a house-steward who

was remarkable for his expertness, attention, and activity. He was called Le Sueur; and his name deserves well to be known, on account of an answer which he once made to his master. When the Duke left the ministry, wishing to reduce his establishment, he told Le Sueur that he was going to lessen his expence; and had no occasion for a man whose talent, which was so distinguished in his way, would be buried in the country. Le Sueur, who had not grown rich in the service of the Duke, notwithstanding the opportunities which he had had, immediately answered: "However, Sir, your must at least "have a scullion, and I ask the pre-"ference for that post."

Towards evening the Duchess de Choiseul went to walk with the Duke, and every one took pleasure in accompanying them: the guests afterwards retired, or played at cards till supper; and

those who did not choose supper retired, without being noticed by any one.

One day, when M. Jarente de la Bruyère, Bishop of Orleans, was at Chanteloup, after reading some amusing work, a gentleman remarked, that novels contained many events destitute of probability, which diminished the pleasure such works might afford. I maintained, on the contrary, that many things happened in real life so extraordinary, that nobody would venture to give them place in a novel, for fear of offending probability. My opinion was disputed: and I supported it by the narration of a remarkable case which occurred in England; and which I could not doubt, because I had it from the Bishop of Durham, who knew the parties.

A jealous husband, who lived in a continual state of hostility with his wife, was at last carried so far by his blind

passion, that he one day poisoned her. The poison becoming obvious by insupportable pains in the stomach, the poor woman sent for physicians; and while she was waiting for their arrival, her husband, who was affected by the dreadful agony which he saw her suffering, threw himself at the feet of his wife, confessed that it was he who had poisoned her, expressed his regret for the crime which his passion had led him to commit, and begged her to pardon him. When the physician came, the wife, enraged against her husband, called the physician and the servants to witness the confession he had made; and declared that she would rather die, in order that he might be hanged, than escape death by taking the remedies which were offered to her. It was in vain that the physician exhorted her to have recourse to the antidotes: it was in vain that the husband endeavoured

to soften her by his tears: she was inexorable; she was determined to die, that her perfidious husband might suffer punishment. The pains increasing, however, were at last more powerful than the representations of the physician and the husband, and obliged her to take the remedies presented to her. She recovered; but it was to outlive her beauty. She lost her hair, her eyebrows, and her teeth: her complexion faded; and nothing remained which could attract the attentions of those men, who had before made her husband so miserably jealous. But what was most remarkable was, that her husband loved her the more; and that she, having no other choice, gave her affections wholly to him: and both afterwards lived in the most perfect union.

I will mention another instance of poisoning, equally ridiculous and not less extraordinary, which I had

from an English nobleman, who had been a witness of it. Lord Oxford kept a mistress, who was extremely capricious. One night, when they were sleeping together after having quarrelled, he was awakened by the cries of his mistress; who beat her face, tore her hair, and exhibited every mark of the greatest despair. He questioned her, and pressed her to tell him the cause of her distress. At last he learnt from her, that in order to avenge herself for the quarrel which they had had together the day before, she had poisoned him at supper, and had also poisoned herself. Alarmed at this declaration, he called up his servants, and sent for several physicians. They came; antidotes were speedily and properly administered; and after they had both vomited copiously for some hours, every body was surprised at the violent bursts of laughter of the

woman; who, falling into an elbow-chair, was more than a quarter of an hour before she was able to explain the cause of such ill-timed gaiety She at last declared, that neither Lord Oxford nor herself had been poisoned; but that she had only wished to be revenged upon him by the alarm which she had given him, and in which she had so well succeeded. Lord Oxford thought the jest rather too serious; and, as it was possible that she had thought of giving that turn to the transaction, only after the effect of the emetics, he resolved never to sup with her again.

" M. * * is right," said the Duchess de Choiseul. " I will add one " proof to his opinion, by relating a " fact which M. Bertin assured me " happened to himself. Wishing to " see his native country (Perigord) " from which he had been long ab- " sent, he went to pay a visit to one

" of his old friends, whom he had not
" heard from for more than a year.
" Upon his arrival at the house, he was
" received by the son of his friend,
" who told him that his father had been
" dead about a year. Though he was
" struck with the news which was so
" unexpected, it did not prevent him
" from going in. He conversed with
" the son upon the state of his affairs,
" and frequently interrupted the con-
" versation to regret the loss of his old
" friend. At night he was conducted
" to his apartment, which he found to
" be the same as the deceased had
" occupied. This circumstance con-
" tributed not a little to keep alive his
" sorrow, and to prevent him from
" sleeping. He continued awake till
" two o'clock in the morning, when
" he heard the door of his chamber
" open; and by the feeble glimmering
" of a night-lamp, and of the fire,

" which was still burning, he perceived
" the figure of an old man, pale, wan,
" and excessively thin, with a long and
" dirty beard, who, shivering with cold,
" was walking on slowly towards the
" chimney. When he was near the
" fire, he seemed to warm himself
" eagerly, saying: ' Ah! it is a long
" ' time since I saw the fire.' In his
" voice, figure, and manner, M. Ber-
" tin, who was seized with terror,
" thought he recognized his old friend,
" the master of the house. He was
" neither able to speak to him nor to
" leave the bed; when the old man,
" turning towards the bed and sigh-
" ing, said, ' Ah! How many nights
" ' have I passed without going to
" ' bed!' and as he said it he came
" forward, in order to throw himself
" upon it. The terror which M.
" Bertin felt made him leap out preci-
" pitately, crying, ' Who are you?

" ' What do you want?' On hearing
" his voice, the old man looked at him
" with astonishment, and immediately
" knew him. ' What do I see?' cried
" he: ' M. Bertin! my friend M. Ber-
" ' tin!'—' And who, then, are you?'
" cried M. Bertin. The old man men-
" tioned his name; and the other, re-
" covering gradually from his fright,
" learnt with horror, that his friend
" had been confined a year in one of
" the vaults of the castle by his son (as-
" sisted by a servant that daily brought
" him food); who had given it out
" that his father was dead, in order
" that he might get possession of his
" property. On that very day, as he
" afterwards learnt, the arrival of M.
" Bertin, who was not expected, hav-
" ing thrown the house into confusion,
" the servant who carried provisions to
" the unfortunate old man, had not pro-
" perly fastened the door of the cell

" when he went away; and the latter,
" perceiving it, waited till all was
" quiet in the castle, and under cover
" of the night endeavoured to escape:
" but not finding the keys in the outer
" door, he naturally took the way to
" his apartment, which, though in the
" dark, he easily found. M. Bertin
" called up his servant without loss of
" time; said he wished to set off im-
" mediately without waking the master
" of the castle; and took the old man
" with him to Périgueux, where they
" arrived at daybreak. Proper officers
" were directly dispatched to arrest
" the unnatural son; who suffered
" what his crime deserved, by being
" shut up, during the remainder of his
" life, in the same cell in which he had
" confined his father."

" As you are talking about cells," said the Duke de Choiseul, " I will tell
" you what once happened to me.

" While I was in office, I received a " letter which there was some diffi- " culty in decyphering. The person " who wrote it, informed me that he " was a Chartreux; and that being " desirous of opposing the irregularity " which prevailed in the morals and " manners of the monks of his con- " vent, he had been shut up by his " brethren in an obscure dungeon, " under a little stair-case which he " pointed out, where he had already " remained several years. After many " ineffectual attempts, he had, at last, " succeeded in gaining over the man " who brought his pittance, so far as " to furnish him with the materials for " writing the letter and conveying it to " me. He concluded by conjuring me " to lose no time in releasing him from " that dreadful abode. I immediately " sent off some officers in disguise," continued the Duke, " who having

" asked, as strangers, to see the house, " were conducted through it by one of " the fathers; and when, by the direc- " tions which had been given them, " they had discovered the little door " under the staircase which had been " pointed out, they produced the " King's order for opening it, and " really found the unfortunate monk, " whom they brought out more dead " than alive. I had his situation " changed, and he was admitted " among the benedictines."

" I also have a story," said the Bishop of Orleans, " which is not so me- " lancholy as those that have just been " told; but, as far as I can judge, it " seems to me that it would not dis- " grace a novel. I one day received " a letter from a nun, who informed " me, that in consequence of an in- " trigue, she had the misfortune to be

" pregnant; and that, in the despair
" into which the ignominy of her si-
" tuation had thrown her, she was
" prepared to destroy herself, if I had
" not the goodness to extricate her from
" her dreadful state. I immediately
" sent a *lettre-de-cachet* to the convent
" where she was, directing her to
" come to Paris, without assigning
" any reason to the abbess; and as
" there was, at that time, a great deal
" of talk about the disputes relative to
" Jansenism, it was supposed that this
" nun was accused of being a Jan-
" senist. When she arrived, I con-
" ducted her to a private house, where
" she was secretly delivered. When
" she recovered, it was agreed that she
" should be sent to a distant province,
" as a nun who had interfered in the
" controversy of the time, but who
" was now resolved to renounce it. I

" therefore sent her to another con-
" vent, recommending her to the
" abbess. She was well received there;
" and led an exemplary life, of which
" unnecessary rigour would have de-
" prived her."

CHAPTER XIII.

Account of M. Holker.—Anecdotes of the Pretender.

Among the company at Chanteloup was an Englishman of the name of Holker who bore the cross of St. Louis, which had been given to him by the Duke de Choiseul. He was Inspector-general of the manufactures of France; and as he owed his fortune to the Duke, he came occasionally to pay his respects to him. As soon as the bishop of Orleans had concluded his story, he said: "If an adventure's being extraordinary is enough for its being inserted in a romance, I think I may expect to have one of mine introduced, which, if I may be permitted, I will relate." Madame de Choiseul

pressed him to proceed with it, which he did in very bad French.

Mr. Holker was born at Manchester, in the county of Lancaster, and was brought up in the principles of the jacobites. He followed the party of the Pretender when that prince made his descent in Scotland, and came with him to Carlisle; where he was taken prisoner with sixty other officers, brought to London, and confined in Newgate with one of his friends whose name was Moss. He learnt every day, that some one of those who were taken with him at Carlisle was carried out to be hanged, and he expected shortly to suffer the same fate himself. Several of his friends, as well as those of Moss, came to see them. They frequently talked of the means of making their escape; and even ropes and files were secretly brought to them, with exact information of the environs of the prison.

They were at last condemned to die, and the day was fixed for their execution; when, the night before, they attempted to escape. They had, by degrees, filed the irons which were upon their legs so far as to be able to break them in an instant when necessary. They were confined in the highest story of the prison, having grated windows which looked upon a gutter. They also filed the two bars of the grating of one of the windows. To escape, it was necessary for them to go along the gutter to reach the house of a hosier: but it was necesary previously to cross a little court belonging to the prison, of eight feet wide, which separated that house from the gaol; and they were told, that with their clothes, cut to serve them instead of ropes, they might let themselves down into the hosier's yard, from which they could easily get into the street, by climbing over a wall of seven

or eight feet high. It occurred to them to split a table which they had in their room, and to tie the three boards together, at the end of each other, so as to form a bridge, weak enough indeed, of eight feet and a half long, and seven or eight inches wide. They tried it repeatedly, by placing the two ends of it upon two chairs: and they found that, though it bent considerably under the weight of a man, it would however bear him; particularly in the manner in which they proposed to use it, which was upon their hands and knees. An hour after midnight they began to attempt their escape. Moss went first, and was already upon the spout, when Holker, who was much thicker than he, called out that it was impossible for him to get through the opening which had been made. Moss, who would not abandon his friend, returned into the room, assisted him in

getting out first, and then followed. They both reached the extremity of the gutter; from which they were to cross the little court, in order to get to the top of the neighbouring house. The light of the moon favoured them; but it also shewed them more clearly the horrors of the danger to which they were exposed, in crossing upon the frail bridge which was to support them at such a frightful height. Fortunately, however, they accomplished it. The one who remained upon the prison side held the plank secure while his friend passed over; and when the other had passed, he, in turn, made it fast to the house. They then went along upon the top of the house, and having tied their clothes to the gutter, let themselves down into the hosier's yard; but they could not do this so softly as not to wake a great dog, which fortunately for them, and contrary to his usual custom, was that

night shut up in the house. Moss, who had gone down first, frightened by the noise of the people of the house, who cried out "Thieves!" got over the wall and was safe. Holker, in slipping down, unfortunately fell into a great tub of water up to his neck; which augmented the noise he had already made, and increased the cries of the hosier, and the barking of the dog. He was not long, however, in getting out, and climbing over the wall. He was soon in the street; and took the road to the house of one of his friends in Carnaby-market, who had promised to receive him. It was half past two o'clock when he arrived at his friend's door. He knocked a long time without any one answering: at last he threw a stone at the window; which, breaking the glass, fell into the room where his perfidious friend slept, who well knew that it was Holker, but

pretended not to hear him, that he might not be obliged to run the risk of receiving him. At last Holker, fearing the day would overtake him, went to claim the protection of a gentleman whom he had seen for a moment in the prison with Moss, and who received him with the greatest humanity. He was conducted to the house of Lady B** at the corner of Grosvenor-square, where he remained some days. He afterwards disguised himself, and went to spend six months in the country, at the house of a man who was devoted to the party; whence, after the search which was made for him had subsided, he went over to France.

We all agreed that this narrative was sufficiently interesting and marvellous to wear the air of romance. We afterwards asked Mr. Holker several questions relative to the Pretender; and he told us

that that unfortunate prince had gone himself to London in 1747 in disguise, and had then seen many of his principal friends, with whom he concerted some measures. Their advice was, that he should march directly for London, before a force could be collected sufficient to oppose him; and they assured him that his presence would determine a considerable party to declare themselves in his favour. When he returned to Carlisle, however, he was dissuaded from this design. The Duke de Choiseul added to this, that in 1759 the Marshal de Belleisle had formed a project of still making use of the Pretender to effect a diversion of the British forces, and had commissioned him to see him for that purpose. The Duke de Choiseul did not approve of the ideas of the Marshal upon the subject; however, he saw the Pretender, who came to him at midnight with

Mr. Alexander Murray, brother to Lord Elibank: but that prince had been at a great supper, and was so intoxicated that he could not converse upon the affair. He demanded to be sent immediately to London with an army: it was desired, on the contrary, that he should be sent to America, whither he did not wish to go. The contempt with which this interview inspired the Duke put an end at once to the design. Since that time the Duke de Choiseul assured me, that in 1761 the Pretender was present at the coronation of the King of England; and that the British ministry knew this, but pretended to be ignorant of it.

CHAPTER XIV.

Return to Paris.

All the pleasures which the most active and the most delicate imagination could invent or desire, were found assembled at Chanteloup. Delightful walks, a noble forest, a cheerful country, without; within, a convenient house, a large library, affluence, freedom in an amiable society, with varied, interesting, and instructive conversation; every thing conspired to make the days spent at Chanteloup the most happy of my life. The Duchess de Grammont, sister of M. de Choiseul, was there the greater part of the time. The Count de Stainville, their brother, was also much there. He was a man of real merit and honour, with a sound judgment; but serious

and cold, wholly opposite in disposition to the Duke de Choiseul. The Count d'Affry said of them, that "the "Count de Stainville was a Ger- "man translation of his brother." Every day news was received from Paris and Versailles: gazettes, journals, private letters, dispatches, speedily announced every thing that was passing in the different parts of the world. It was necessary, however, to quit this residence, so full of attractions, as the winter was coming on: I therefore left Chanteloup, and returned to the house of the Countess de Boufflers; whom I found extremely uneasy relative to the health of the Prince de Conti, which was daily declining.

Full of sensibility and attention for her illustrious friend, Madame de Boufflers every night assembled a small but select circle of friends, to entertain the Prince de Conti; and though I

never supped she begged me to be there, because it was agreeable to the Prince, who always inquired where I was when he did not see me. Those who were in the habit of attending there most frequently, were the Maréchale de Luxembourg, the Duchess de Biron, the Princess de Poix, Madame d'Hunolsthein, and the Countess de Vaupan; and among the men, the Count Donnezan, the Viscount de Ségur, the Prince de Poix, the Marquis de la Fayette, the Duke de Guines, and the Archbishop of Toulouse. The Princess de Beauveau also visited there, but not so often. I once saw the Count de Broglio, who I was told was a man of uncommon eloquence and penetration, and with whom I should be charmed; but he did not open his mouth. Madame de Boufflers told me next day, that I had been the cause of his silence, because he did not know

me. I therefore begged her to acquaint me when he was to sup with her again, that I might keep away. The Count de Broglio had not been long recalled from his exile. He had stood very well with the late King, had even carried on a secret correspondence with him, and was not without hopes of becoming prime minister. He had been appointed to receive the Countess d'Artois upon the frontiers, when the Duke d'Aiguillon, learning his intrigues against him, took the opportunity of having him banished to his estates. In going thither he passed not far from Chanteloup; and the Duke de Choiseul having learnt that the Count de Broglio was going into exile, said: "*Il prend le ministère par la queue.*"*

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* "He has taken the Government by the "wrong end:" in allusion to the Count's expectation of being put at the head of affairs.

The Chevalier de Boufflers, whom I mentioned before, (and who was the most pleasing poet of the age, and possessed the most charming good-humour), also attended these suppers. I had known him intimately during my stay at Vienna, whither he had come to obtain information concerning the state of the Confederates of Poland, whose cause he was desirous of espousing. Even in his childhood he gave indications of the wit for which he afterwards became celebrated. When he was at school, he went one day with his brother to dine at the house of a lady of their acquaintance: but having arrived too late, another dinner, the best that could be had, was hastily prepared for them; consisting of a joint of meat which was not very tender, and a fowl which was very tough. Having both the appetites of school-boys, they,

in spite of all difficulties, dispatched all that was upon the table. The Chevalier de Boufflers very humourously called this dinner the battle of the *Voraces* against the *Coriaces*.*

There were also little concerts, from time to time, at Madame de Boufflers', in which the Countess Amelia displayed her enchanting talents upon the harp. She played with incomparable grace and sweetness; and when she accompanied that melodious instrument, with her voice, which was most enchanting, she delighted all her hearers, and easily gained all hearts; but her caprices soon set them at liberty again. Among those who came to admire her figure and her talents, the Count d'Adhémar struck

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* "Horaces" and "Curiaces" are the French names of the *Horatii* and *Curiatii*: "Voraces" are *voracious persons*, and "Coriaces," *articles as tough as leather*.

me by the fineness of his voice and his taste for singing. I have been told that he even gave himself up to it in a greater degree than was compatible with his rank and birth; and as a proof of it, the following occurrence was adduced. After having taken all possible pains to perfect himself in singing, he wished to consult M. de la Garde, principal musician to the King. He inquired where he lived, and was directed to a house in the Place Vendome. Having asked for M. de la Garde, he was ushered into a very fine apartment, where he saw the master of the house, who advancing towards him, very politely inquired the occasion of the visit. M. d'Adhémar told him that he had a favour to ask of him, which was, that he would have the goodness to hear him sing, and give him his opinion. "With all my heart, Sir," answered the other, a little surprised. M.

d'Adhémar sung; and when he had finished, M. de la Garde gave him all the praise he deserved. "You flatter "me," said M. d'Adhémar.—"No," replied M. de la Garde: "though I "am no musician, I am a sufficient "judge to know that you sing perfectly "well."—"How! you are no musi- "cian? Is it not M. de la Garde to "whom I am speaking?"—"Yes, Sir; "M. de la Garde the *farmer-general*: "*the musician lives next door.*"

CHAPTER XV.

Lieutenant of Police at Paris.—Return to London.—Third Journey to Italy.

Madame de Boufflers wishing to give a grand supper to her friends, and desiring to have a faro-table to amuse them, sent one of her friends to the lieutenant of police to ask his permission: but this officer, who was at that time M. Albert, instead of granting the request, received the messenger rather sharply; and though it was represented to him that it was to amuse the Prince de Conti, he said that he would have any person chastised who should dare to hold a bank at the house of Madame de Boufflers. She was greatly offended by this refusal, and complained of it to the minister; and M. Albert, who had done no more

than his duty, was reprimanded. It is true, he had been deficient in form; and the great nobility of France shewed their pride, even in their solicitations. A judge, when a great lady went to solicit in a cause, had more the air of a suppliant than she. I heard the Duke de Liancourt relate an affair which he had with this same lieutenant of police, M. Albert. The Duke went to ask him to render him some piece of service; and because he did not receive him with sufficient politeness, gave him a severe reprimand.

In all this time I received no money from England. My agent had seen my death announced in the public papers: it was useless for me to write, and to get my friends to speak to him; he produced the paper, and maintained that I was dead. I was therefore obliged to leave Paris, in spite of all the pleasures which I was enjoying there. Madame de Boufflers wished to

detain me; but notwithstanding my regret at leaving her, I could not delay my departure. Yet the illness of the Prince de Conti increased, and the physicians began to despair of his recovery; and under these circumstances, I could not resolve to abandon a lady to whom I owed so much, and was so strongly attached, as to Madame de Boufflers. One day, however, when several physicians had assembled to consult together upon the disorder of the Prince, they unanimously declared that he was out of danger. Madame de Boufflers was transported with joy, and I then thought I might avail myself of the moment to leave Paris. I took leave of her and the Prince de Conti, promising to return speedily. I departed for London, where I had scarcely arrived when I learnt that the Prince de Conti had died (August 2, 1776), and that Madame de Boufflers was plunged in the deepest affliction. This Prince

had not reached his sixtieth year, and I then remembered a singular fact relative to the princes of the House of Bourbon: it was, that for more than two hundred years there had only been three or four who had lived above that age; namely, Louis XIV., Louis XV. the present King of Spain, and the Count de Clermont. Another thing remarkable in the history of this House is, that the two longest reigns known in France, are those of two succeeding kings: for, in a hundred and thirty years, from 1643 to 1774, there was only one accession to the throne of that country.

I returned to London, where the princess d'Aschkow had just arrived. I became acquainted with her; and was very serviceable to her in her project of fixing herself some years in Edinburgh, to complete the education of her son. I met her five years after at Turin, where I had an opportunity of

introducing in conversation the circumstances which attended the accession of the Empress Catharine to the throne of Russia. She told me that, at the revolution, not only a very great discontent prevailed in the Russian nation against the government of Peter III., but that a design had been discovered which he had formed, for confining the Empress and the Princess d'Aschkow, her confidante and friend. The latter was then only eighteen or nineteen; and she told me that she had every reason to believe that she and the Empress would have stood a chance of losing their lives if they had not been beforehand with the Emperor, which induced her to enter into the plot that was formed for preventing the designs of that Prince. The Emperor was nine leagues from Petersburgh, at Oranienbaum; and the Empress at another villa, seven

leagues from the capital, and two leagues from her husband; when the Princess d'Aschkow learnt that the plot was discovered: and that a traitor belonging to their party had dispatched a courier to the Emperor, at eight o'clock at night, to inform him of what was passing. She immediately (July 9, 1762), sent for the Count de Panin her uncle, the Count de Rosamouski, the Marshal Buttertin, and the Orlows, who were the chiefs of the conspiracy, to inform them of the treachery, and to concert together upon the measures which it was necessary to pursue. It was decided, upon the earnest advice of the Princess d'Aschkow, that the Empress should immediately be brought to Petersburgh, that the commanders of the Cossacks and guards should secure her the twelve thousand men who were then in garrison in the city, and that the person of the Emperor should be seized.

The Princess d'Aschkow was of opinion that the Grand Duke ought to be proclaimed Emperor; and the Empress, his mother, only guardian and regent. But the advice of the Count de Panin and the Orlows prevailed, which was to proclaim the Empress *Autocratrix*, reigning in her own right. During the night the Empress travelled to Petersburgh, and measures necessary for the execution of this great design were adopted; and the next day, at nine in the morning, Catherine was proclaimed *Autocratrix*. She went directly, at the head of ten thousand men, to seize the person of the Emperor. He signed an abdication of the throne, was kept out of sight, and eight days after died. The public, who are always eager to search into the secret reasons of great events, believed that his death was violent. They even went so far as to say that

Count Alexis Orlow, called the *Balafré* * (the same who commanded the Russian fleet which burnt the Turkish fleet in the last war) had contributed to it. I shall not relate the manner in which the Princess explained herself upon that subject, though she did it with some reserve: I shall only say, that the Orlows, who wished to enjoy absolute authority, perceiving the credit which she had with the Empress, and the influence which the Count de Panin had acquired through his niece, and by his own talents, attempted to ruin them both. The Princess experienced a thousand vexations, particularly on the part of Prince Gregory Orlow; whom the Empress appointed Prince of the Empire, and loaded with honours and riches: she supported herself, however, by her spirit and courage.

* *Balafré*, a person whose face is cut or wounded with sharp instruments or arms.

Two years after the revolution she became a widow. Being appointed guardian of the person and property of her son, she found that the income of his estates was scarcely sufficient to pay the interest of her husband's debts. She then retired to the country, where she lived with such strict economy, that she paid these debts; and when her son had attained the age of twelve, she obtained permission to bring him to England, where I saw her for the first time. She also brought with her Madame de Scherbinin, her daughter (then sixteen years old); whom she had married to the son of a Russian general, and to whom the Empress had given a portion of a hundred thousand crowns: the only benefaction, she told me, she had ever received from that Princess; except her portrait enriched with diamonds, and attached to the collar of the order, which she took from her own neck and put upon that of the Princess.

What astonished me extremely was, that the Princess d'Aschkow, when speaking of all this at Turin, seemed to be ignorant of the manner in which the Emperor died. I related to her what a famous Italian musician, at that time with the Emperor, had frequently told me at Vienna, London, and Paris, where I had met him. She expressed great surprise, and wished to know who the musician was. I told her: and as she was then going to the city where he was, I have no doubt that she found him out, in order to converse with him on the subject. I afterwards saw the Princess d'Aschkow at Rome; and as she had no occasion for my services there, she repaid me for those which I had rendered her at London and Turin, in a way which gave me the greatest vexation, and made me regret that I had ever known her.

I enquired of the Princess concerning a person named Auda, of Nice, whom she

had patronised in Russia, and whom I knew upon his return from that country. She told me, that upon his arrival at Petersburgh, he had lived in the family of her father; that, at the time of the revolution, finding he had some talents, she had made use of him, but in a vague manner, without letting him into the secret; that, after that event, he took it into his head that he was one of the principal instruments of the revolution; and that, at last, the Empress having made him one of her private secretaries, given him thirty thousand roubles, and treated him with her usual generosity, his head became turned. He looked upon himself as formed to be prime minister; and thinking he might supplant the Count de Panin, he joined the party of the Orlows: but finding that he could not succeed, he was very glad to retire to his own country, under any pretext, with a part

of his fortune. This same Auda, having settled at Nice, was killed there by lightning some years after.

At my arrival in London, I found that the Duke of Northumberland and his family, as well as Mr. Mackenzie and the greater part of my friends, were already retired to the country. I went into the north of England, to pass the summer with the Duke: he pressed me to join him in the autumn, when I should have arranged the affairs of my benefice, at another estate which he had in the south of England, in Devonshire. I was so much devoted to his wishes, that though these journeys were burthensome to me, I crossed England to go and spend some days with him and the Duchess; and I returned with them to London. Three months after, the Duchess of Northumberland died very suddenly. I had passed the day with her: she had com-

pany; and was, as usual, very cheerful and entertaining. The next morning I went to see her; and as I was leaving her, she made me promise to come and spend the evening with her. I said that I would come at nine o'clock. About seven o'clock a servant came from her, to beg me to come to her immediately. I ran thither, somewhat alarmed at this message; as soon as I arrived she made me sit down, and said to me: "I am ill: I am persuaded "that I shall not live long; and I am "afraid of losing my faculties before "I take leave of you, as I have "some things to confide to you." Astonished at such language, I said all I could to remove the idea from her mind; but she was so fixed in it, that all my efforts were useless. "It has "been foretold to me," said she "that "I shall not pass my sixtieth year; "and I shall be sixty on Thursday: I

" feel that the prediction will be ac-
" complished; let us, therefore, not
" waste time in vain reasoning." She then told me all that she had to entrust me with; and took leave of me, as if she never expected to see me again.

For my own part, as I could not persuade myself that she was so near her end, I shewed less concern. I saw her the next day, but she was so much altered that she scarcely knew any one. During a moment of recollection, however, she raised her eyes towards me, and said to me, " Adieu, " for ever!" On Thursday night she asked what o'clock it was; she was told, six. " I have then still two " hours to live," said she, " for I " was born at eight o'clock;" and, in fact, at about eight o'clock she died, having completed her sixtieth year.

In her I lost not only a true friend, but a powerful patroness; and I lost

her at the moment when the influence which her husband had just recovered at Court was to be employed by her for my advancement. The Duke was sensibly afflicted by this loss, and on that occasion he had an opportunity of experiencing my zeal and my affection for him. Rich and magnificent as he was, great as was the consideration which he enjoyed, both with the people and at Court, the idea of his never having done any thing for his friends, had by degrees alienated them from him; and at a time when he stood in need of consolation, there was none but myself who stood by him. I did not quit him for three months; and I was the only person whose assiduities were proof against the irksomeness of this duty. I can even say, that I felt perfect satisfaction in evincing the purity of my attachment, which must have appeared to him wholly disinte-

rested, as I had already rendered him services which had never been recompensed.

About this time Mr. Mackenzie communicated to me a design he had formed for going to Naples with his lady; adding, that it could never take place unless I would be of the party. I did not hesitate to accept his proposal; charmed at having an opportunity of being useful to him, and of acknowledging in some measure the obligations I owed him. Accordingly he made suitable preparations for the journey, which he begged me to keep secret. We were not far from the time of our departure, when the Duke of Northumberland, more and more convinced how necessary I was to him, proposed to me, through Lord Algernon Percy, that I should attach myself wholly to him; and accept his table, his house, and five hundred pounds a

year, as a compensation for the time which I should give him. He moreover assured me, that he would treat me like himself, and that I should be the person whom he would every where present as his best friend.

There was something flattering in this offer; though I clearly understood, reducing it to its just value, that the Duke proposed that I should renounce my existence to double his, at a price considerable to me it is true, but trifling to him. Perhaps I should have agreed to this overture at any other time: but having promised Mr. Mackenzie to go with him to Italy, and knowing that he would not undertake the journey without me, I could not prevail upon myself to be wanting in gratitude to my first friend; and I assigned this reason to the Duke of Northumberland for my refusal. He knew, that fourteen years before, Mr. Mac-

kenzie had declared that I was to expect nothing more from him, that I might not be kept in suspense, nor deceive myself with vain hopes. He could not help praising the generosity of my conduct; and that made him more desirous of attaching me, if possible, to himself. He therefore told me, that he saw me depart with regret; but begged me to promise to return to him as soon as I came back from the expedition, which could not last longer than a year. I did not absolutely engage myself; and I set out, without informing Mr. Mackenzie what I had refused on his account, that I might not wound his delicacy.

I will not enter into any detail of this new journey. I revisited Paris, Turin, Rome, and Naples, of which places I have already spoken fully elsewhere. I returned to England, resolved to seek retirement and repose;

and to renounce the world and the hopes nourished in it, which I had so frequently seen frustrated. I was nearly fifty years old: was it not then time to live for myself, after having lived so long for others? What had I gained during the fifteen years I had spent in paying court to the great, to men in office, and men in power? On the contrary, had I not involved myself in debt by living among them? Had they even thought of inquiring into my circumstances, and of procuring any addition to my income? Besides, was not this income sufficient for me, if I chose to live as suited a man of my age who had resources in his own mind; and who was not without friends of his own rank, that would not exact duties which they themselves would not be ready to pay? These reflections, which were supported by so many years of experience, prevented me from giving a

decisive answer to the Duke of Northumberland upon my return. I only begged Lady Algernon Percy, who was then in London, and going to him in the country, to tell him, that if I were rich enough to purchase the pleasure of being always with him, I should have no other ambition; and that, without making any other engagement, I would be to him the same that I had always been. He came to London, and nothing more was ever said upon the subject.

CHAPTER XVI.

Tragical Adventure of the Viscount du Barry, at Bath.

THE season for the Duke of Northumberland to go and drink the waters of Bath having arrived, he proposed to me, as usual, to go thither with him. Bath is a most agreeable place: it is the Spa of England, but more convenient and more magnificent. I was very fond of passing some weeks there in the winter; particularly with the Duke of Northumberland, who saw a great deal of company. I therefore accepted the offer, and went. We found there a French family, the Viscount and Viscountess du Barry, whom Mrs. Damer had known at Spa, and had prevailed upon to come and try the

waters of Bath. I became acquainted with them; and was witness to the catastrophe which happened to them, and which I am going to relate.

The Viscount du Barry was the son of the celebrated Count du Barry, called *le Roué*. In the time of the great favour of Madame du Barry with Louis XV., he married the daughter of the Count de Tournou; of an illustrious family, and a branch of the house of the famous Cardinal of that name. The Prince de Soubise, (their kinsman, and a near relation of the lady,) took her from a convent to effect this marriage; and I was witness of the indignation of the French nobility against an alliance so degrading to her. The Viscountess du Barry was of a charming figure and of dazzling beauty; she had a noble air and much sweetness, joined to great ease and dignity of manners. Her conduct was irreproachable.

The Viscount was called to Court. He was cornet in the light-horse; the King admitted him to his private parties, and bestowed many caresses upon him. He conducted himself with so much prudence and modesty, that he did not participate in the hatred which was attached to his name. He was, however, overwhelmed in the disgrace of his family upon the death of the King; for after the accession of Louis XVI. he appeared no more at Court.

In 1778 he was at Spa, with his wife and sister-in-law, Mademoiselle de Tournou; who was about fifteen years old, handsome, full of grace, and particularly excelled in dancing, of which she was passionately fond.

They earnestly pressed the Count de Rice, an Irish gentleman, to come with them. Count de Rice was a nephew of Marshal Lascy; had lived much abroad, where he had mixed in

the best companies; and for eight years had been very intimate with the Viscount du Barry. They were likewise accompanied by Mr. Toole, an Irish gentleman in the French service. Upon their arrival in Bath they took a handsome house. Mrs. Damer came to visit them, and introduced them to her friends. They kept open house, had parties and suppers, lived at a great expense, and, it was said, had great resources. In reality, besides a considerable credit which the Viscount had upon a banker in London, he was fortunate at play, particularly at faro; which, though it was prohibited in England, was sometimes played at his house.

I was then at Bath. I was introduced at Madame du Barry's; and I found her house so agreeable, that I scarcely passed a day without going thither.

One night, when Madame du Barry

had a large company, I observed that she seemed very uneasy: I asked her the reason of it, and she complained of having a head-ache. The Viscount did not appear. I enquired after him; it was said he was indisposed, and Count de Rice was keeping him company. She went twenty times out of the room, under pretence of taking the air; and at last did not return, leaving Mademoiselle de Tournou to do the honours of the house.

The next day at nine in the morning, I was told that the Viscount du Barry had fought with Count de Rice; that he had been killed in the rencontre, and that the Count was dangerously wounded. The situation of the Viscountess at once presented itself to my mind in all its perplexity. Deprived, in a moment, of her husband and of her friends (for Mr. Toole had been

one of the seconds); young, a foreigner, without experience, without a knowledge of the language of the country, and surrounded with foreign servants; every thing concurred to increase her distress. I ran to her house to offer her my services, and asked to speak to her valet-de-chambre. His mistress as yet knew nothing of the matter; the two friends had gone out at two o' clock in the morning, in spite of her efforts and tears. Under pretence of going down with her into the dining-room, they had hastily got into the street: she ran after them, calling out as loud as she could; they ran faster still and the darkness soon concealed them from her sight. Let any one imagine this charming young woman alone, at two o' clock in the morning, wandering about Bath, without a guide, and abandoned to despair. Her valet-de-chambre, who was looking for her,

found her leaning against a wall, almost senseless, and brought her back to her house.

Persons were sent every where, without being able to hear any thing of the Viscount du Barry or the Count de Rice.

The servants had heard the general report of the duel, but nothing certain was known; I therefore did not think it yet time to ask to see the Viscountess. It was said that Count de Rice had been carried to a furnished lodging. I went thither; he was very glad to see me, and related the subject of their quarrel. The origin of it was not important; but the manner in which it had been conducted, he said, rendered it so. He had made some representations to the Viscount, relative to some offensive imprecation which frequently escaped him: the latter had taken offence at the remonstrance; and, in the

heat of dispute, had given him the lie. The Viscount, who was extremely irritable, could not support the coolness of his friend, and grew more warm: at last things came to such a height, that both parties agreed to fight with sword and pistol, till one or the other should fall.

It has been said that this was only a pretext; and that M. du Barry had begun to hate Count de Rice, who had himself expressed some uneasiness upon the subject to a lady of Bath. But I have reason to think that this opinion was without foundation. They had sent for Mr. Toole and a Mr. Rogers, an Irish gentleman, to be their seconds upon the occasion; and, taking a surgeon with them, had all set off together out of town. They waited four hours, till day-break, in a carriage which they had taken at Bath, and during that interval settled the

conditions of the duel. The Viscount, who was impatient to fight, left the carriage at day-break; and the ground having been taken, he fired the first shot, and wounded Count de Rice in the thigh. The Count then fired; and the ball, penetrating the Viscount's breast, severed the grand artery and he fell, the blood flowing copiously from the wound. Count de Rice advanced towards him with his sword in his hand; when the Viscount, feeling himself weakened, begged his life. "I "give it you," replied his adversary; but as he said these words he saw him roll upon the ground, vomit blood, and a moment after expire. Count de Rice, no longer able to stand, seated himself upon the ground, and the surgeon dressed his wound. The ball had penetrated the upper part of the thigh to the bone: the wound was not unlikely

to prove mortal; and he was carried, with much difficulty, to Bath.

In the mean time, the Viscountess had sent every where. A report of the death of the Viscount had got abroad, but her servants did not venture to acquaint her with it. As I was leaving Count de Rice's, I met her house-steward, who was looking for me. He came to inform me tha his mistress was in the greatest uneasiness; that she was absolutely resolved to go out to enquire for her husband, and that he no longer knew what pretext to make use of to prevent her. I ran immediately to Mrs. Macartney, on of the ladies of Bath in whom she had the most confidence, and begged her to go with me to the Viscountess. She went to her first: she told her that I had brought intelligence of her husband having fought with Count de

Rice, and being mortally wounded. I went in a quarter of an hour afterwards, and found her in such affliction as may be more easily imagined than described. I concluded by increasing it to the utmost, on informing her, by degrees, of the fatal event of the duel: she gave way to an excess of grief which appeared to me profound and real; notwithstanding the cruel attempts of the most atrocious calumny, which dared to attack her under circumstances so entitled to compassion. It was pretended that Count de Rice had excited the jealousy of the Viscount, and that the Viscountess had been the first cause of their quarrel. She now wrote to him; but as he was not in a state to answer in writing, I offered to carry the note, and to bring

back a verbal answer. As she did not acquaint me with the subject of the letter, I mentioned this to the Count when I delivered it; and advised him to give me an answer in general terms, which could only be comprehended by the Viscountess.

He requested me to say, that he had already given orders for what she desired; and he begged me to send the Viscountess's valet-de-chambre to him, as he had something to communicate to him. He wrote to her, however, by this valet-de-chambre; and every body was astonished at seeing a correspondence promptly established between two persons, who, it was thought, ought to have had so little communication together.

I spent the whole day in consoling the Viscountess. An express was sent

off to London to Mrs. Damer, who had left Bath fifteen days before, begging her to come down, as soon as possible, to her friends; and I was employed in making preparations for her departure, the moment when Mrs. Damer should arrive. I went, from time to time, to see the Count, to obtain some explanations relative to the Viscount's affairs. I learnt from him, that the letter of the Viscountess and his answer were concerning the state of these. The Viscount had provided for every thing, and had adjusted his accounts. He expected a remittance from his banker of four hundred guineas, which he had appropriated to the payment of his debts. He had drawn a draft for two hundred guineas, which he had put into the hands of his house-steward; and it was said that he had two hun-

dred guineas in his pocket-book, and a hundred and fifty in his purse, which his second, Mr. Toole, had taken charge of before he quitted him. But Mr. Toole was not to be found. He feared the pursuit of justice, if the coroner's verdict, which was about to be brought in, should not be favourable to Count de Rice. He had reason to apprehend that it would not, for it appeared that the seconds had concurred in agreeing that one of them must fall. They had marked out a distance of five-and-twenty yards, and had agreed to advance upon each other as they might see fit. Each had a pair of pistols and his sword. It was stipulated, besides, that the conqueror might, without quarter, dispatch his antagonist, even when he was upon the ground. It would be very difficult, according to the laws of England, to

have this construed otherwise than as wilful murder.

Twenty-four hours after the departure of the courier, Mrs. Damer arrived at Bath. I gave her to understand that Count de Rice desired to see her, but advised her not to countenance a proceeding which might justify the injurious suspicions entertained by the public relative to the Viscountess. She therefore merely sent to tell him, that unless he had something to communicate to her essential to the interests of the Viscountess, she could not see him; and she required that he should give her his word of honour, that he would not request her to come but upon that condition. He answered that he would not commit the Viscountess, and that he hoped in a short time to be able to write. Every thing being arranged, I urged Mrs. Damer

to take the Viscountess from Bath; assuring them that I would undertake to superintend the funeral of the Viscount, and to arrange her affairs. They accordingly set out, accompanied by Mademoiselle Tournou and the whole equipage. The next day the coroner's jury sat; and declared, in their verdict, that the death of the Viscount was a homicide, occasioned by a quarrel in the heat of passion. The consequences were no longer to be feared by Count de Rice nor by the seconds. I saw the former several times, and he acquainted me with every thing which it was necessary for the Viscountess to know. I set out for London; and arrived there time enough to inform her of them, before her departure for France, whither Mrs. Damer reconducted her.

Some days after this I saw Mr. Toole;

who had restored to the Viscountess the pocket-book and purse of her husband, before she left Bath. He informed me of some particulars relative to the quarrel between the two friends. When they sent for him, things had gone so far between them that no possibility remained of reconciling their differences. They did not acquaint him, however, with the cause of their quarrel; but he did not doubt that it took its origin in the jealousy which the Viscount had conceived of his friend, though he was very far from imputing to the Viscountess her having ever given the least occasion for it. Since that time I have had frequent opportunities of conversing with Count de Rice upon the subject of this unfortunate affair. He assured me that the true reason of their quarrel was, a discovery which he had that

morning made, of a design to poison him, formed by the Viscount: upon which I represented to him that he had better be silent relative to that reason; for in the impossibility there was of bringing proof of such an attempt, he would have reason to fear that the accusation would be considered as a calumny against a man who could no longer defend himself.

CHAPTER XVII.

Duchillou is disgusted with Connections among the Great.—Reasons which detach him from them.

For the honour of the English I must declare, that their humanity, upon these occasions, surpasses that of all other nations. A considerable number of noblemen and ladies, who scarcely knew Madame du Barry, came to offer her their services; and what is never equivocal, their purse. Two or three who were in London, learning her melancholy situation, hastened to her assistance: among others General Smith; from whom she accepted four hundred guineas to settle her affairs at Bath, which she remitted to him soon after.

The Duke of Northumberland and myself returned to London, and I re-

sumed my former course of life. I divided my time between my studies and some particular friends, among whom was a lady whom I have not yet mentioned; though, of all the friends I had, it was from her that I received the most constant proofs of friendship, during about five-and-twenty years that I have been acquainted with her. Mrs. Tichborne, of whom I am now speaking, was the intimate friend of the Duchess of Northumberland; she was nearly of the same age, and from her earliest youth had been brought up with her. I was soon struck with the agreeable turn of her mind; and, what most generally pleases and pre-disposes for early friendship, I was grateful for her attention to a new-comer in a great family, in which I sought to gain favour. Mrs. Tichborne, perceiving that I was desirous of attaching myself to her, encouraged me with kindness.

She seized every occasion of recommending me, and contributed not a little to advance me in the opinion of the Duke and Duchess of Northumberland. When I was travelling with Lord Algernon Percy we established an intercourse of letters; which she kept up, during all my travels, with constant exactness, and which constituted one of the principal comforts of my life: for besides that it was of the greatest utility to me, no English lady ever wrote better in the epistolary style than she did. Her letters were, like her conversation, natural, lively, gay; full of reason, wit, and interest. When the conformity of our tastes and our attachments had further cemented our friendship, her attentions to me always went beyond my desires. Exacting nothing, she thought herself obliged in every thing: sympathising for her friends, even so far as to forget herself; conforming to

their desires, participating their inclinations, espousing their quarrels; she was, and always will be, in my eyes, the most finished model I have ever known of true, enlightened, cordial, and sincere friendship. It is to her I owe the thought of committing these Memoirs to writing.

Mrs. Tichborne was perfectly acquainted with the Duke of Northumberland's mode of thinking. She frequently talked of it to me; but I was so prejudiced in his favour, that I would not listen to the advice she gave me to devote myself less to him. Nevertheless, I was struck with the reflection which she suggested to my mind, upon the idea that he had of doing nothing for those he liked, in order to keep them with him. Some occurrences which I omit here, came in support of this observation, and completely opened my eyes.

Though my conduct towards Mr. Mackenzie, of which the Duke was not ignorant, might have exempted me from the application of such a precaution, I was, however, so well situated for experiencing the effect of it, that I was convinced of the truth of the observation. I was disposed to think favourably of the Duke of Northumberland; and almost disposed to feel myself obliged to him for his partiality to me, though detrimental to my interest. But a more natural reflection took place of this fit of good-nature: I was wholly ashamed of the simplicity of my character, and of the ignorance I had hitherto been in of the knowledge of the great; with whom, however, I had passed the best part of my life. I blushed at having lost so much time, in being the dupe of him upon whom I had the most right to depend: and to satisfy the moderation of my disposition,

which would not allow me to seem to break with the Duke, I contrived a journey to Italy to detatch myself from him; and I stored my portfolio with Régnier's Satire upon the Great, that I might always have with me that excellent preservative against the attractions of an intercourse with them.

SATIRE OF REGNIER DESMARETS,

Who died in 1713, *at the Age of* 81.

LES GRANDS SEIGNEURS.

Il faut toujours aux grands Seigneurs
Rendre toutes sortes d'honneurs;
Les aimer, c'est une autre affaire.
Qui ne les connoît qu'à demi,
S'honore d'être leur ami;
Qui les connoît bien, ne l'est guère.
Ils sont d'un commerce très-doux,
Tant qu'ils ont affaire de vous:
Hors de là, c'est tout le contraire;
Comme si tout leur étoit dû,
Chez eux d'un service rendu
L'ingratitude est le salaire.

Il ne leur faut pour serviteurs
Que de fades adulateurs ;
La vérité leur est amère.
Approchez d'eux comme du feu ;
Les bien connoître, et les voir peu,
C'est le mieux que vous puissiez faire.
Au-dehors ils semblent heureux,
Et tout semble être fait pour eux ;
Au-dedans ce n'est que misère.
Chaque passion, tour à tour,
Comme une espèce de vautour,
Les déchire et les désespère.
D'une sotte gloire bouffis,
Des Dieux ils s'estiment les fils ;
Sosie est peut-être leur père ;
Leur mère en sait la vérité.
Quoiqu'il en soit, la vanité
Fait presque tout leur caractère.
Ce sont des ballons que le sort
Pousse en l'air, ou plus ou moins fort,
Et dont il joue à sa manière ;
Des globes de savon et d'eau,
Que forme au bout d'un chalumeau
D'un enfant l'haleine légère ;
Chaque globe est plus ou moins grand ;
Mais tous ne sont pleins que de vent.
Telle est des grands la troupe entière.

Dès l'enfance, à l'erreur livrés,
Et de la vérité sevrés,
Ils se repaissent de chimère.
A peine ont-ils le sens commun ;
J'en excepte pourtant quelqu'un,
Que j'estime et que je révère :
Le reste n'est bon qu'à noyer ;
Aussi j'opine à l'envoyer
Par le plus court à la rivière.

Dulcis inexpertis cultura potentis amici,
Expertus metuit.....

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Dutens, Louis
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